

The Commodification of Nature, the Body, and Life in the Era of Global Capitalism



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Commodification of Nature, the Body, and Emotions in the Post-Capitalist World:

From Kidney Sales to the Global Sex Market

Acknowledge

In the post-capitalist world, the relationship between human beings, nature, the body, and emotions is no longer defined merely within cultural or social frameworks; rather, it is being re-created under the logic of the market and economic exchange. The process of commodification, which began with the rise of industrial capitalism, now continues in a more complex and globalized form. Even domains once regarded as sacred, private, or non-negotiable have been drawn into the sphere of buying and selling. From the sale of vital organs such as kidneys to the transformation of emotional and sexual relationships into price-tagged services, we witness how moral and human boundaries shift daily when confronted with profitability and market demand.

This book is an attempt to explore the diverse dimensions of the commodification of nature, the body, and emotions in the contemporary era, focusing on concrete and tangible examples—from the trade in human organs and the surrogacy industry, to the global economy of sex work and the marketing of love and intimacy in digital spaces. Along this path, the author not only analyzes the economic and political structures hidden behind these processes, but also examines the cultural, ethical, and psychological consequences of such transformations. These changes reveal how, in the post-capitalist world, even the deepest emotions and the most fundamental elements of human life can be turned into commodities.

The strength of this book lies in presenting the latest global statistics on these issues, while also drawing on the most recent debates and the most influential critical perspectives on the commodification of humanity and nature. It incorporates a wide spectrum of thought, ranging from the foundational analyses of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels on the transformation of labor power and natural resources into commodities under capitalism, to Karl Polanyi's critiques of the disintegration of social bonds in the "market society," and John Bellamy Foster's warnings about ecological crises driven by unrestrained capital accumulation. Contemporary feminist approaches also play a central role, highlighting how capitalism commodifies not only nature, but also women's bodies, emotions, and reproductive labor—demonstrating that the bodily, emotional, and gendered dimensions of human life are increasingly drawn into the realm of trade and profit.

Part One – The Genealogy of the World and Humankind

1.1 Early Forms of Life

From a scientific perspective, life first appeared on Earth in the form of very simple organisms (such as bacteria and microscopic algae). Millions of years later, more complex animal species evolved. *Homo sapiens*—modern humans—represent one of the newest species in this evolutionary chain. Scientifically, modern humans (*Homo sapiens*) did not descend directly from present-day chimpanzees or gorillas; rather, humans and these primates share a common ancestor who lived millions of years ago.

When explaining the “order of appearance,” one must first clarify whether the perspective is scientific (geology and evolution) or religious (creation stories), as these viewpoints differ fundamentally.

1.2 According to Geology and Evolution

The sequence of major global events is generally described as follows:

1. Formation of the Earth and oceans – about 4.5 billion years ago.
2. Formation of the Earth’s crust and mountains, as the surface cooled and tectonic plates shifted – around 4 billion years ago.
3. Emergence of the first living organisms in the oceans (bacteria and algae) – about 3.5 billion years ago.
4. Appearance of simple marine plants and animals – about 600 million years ago.
5. Plants move onto land – about 475 million years ago.
6. Animals move onto land (insects, amphibians) – about 400 million years ago.
7. Dinosaurs and large reptiles – around 230 million years ago.
8. Small mammals – around 200 million years ago.
9. Birds – about 150 million years ago.
10. Extinction of dinosaurs – approximately 66 million years ago.
11. Large mammals and primates (including monkeys) – 65 to 30 million years ago.
12. Early hominins (*Australopithecus*) – about 4 million years ago.
13. Modern humans (*Homo sapiens*) – about 300,000 years ago.

1.3 Creation Narratives in the Abrahamic Religions

In the scriptures of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, creation is usually presented in a general order such as:

1. Heavens and Earth
2. Light and darkness
3. Waters and dry land (mountains, plains)

4. Plants
5. Sun, moon, and stars
6. Fish and birds
7. Land animals
8. Human beings (Adam, followed by Eve)

According to today's paleontological and genetic evidence, however, early humans descended from a common ancestor shared with modern apes. Genetic studies reveal that humans and chimpanzees share about 98–99% of their DNA. This common ancestor lived in Africa roughly 5 to 7 million years ago, from which one evolutionary branch led to early humans, while another led to chimpanzees and bonobos.

1.4 The Path of Human Evolution

From this common ancestor, the human branch diverged into several genera and species, the most significant of which include:

1. *Australopithecus* (about 4 to 2 million years ago) – ape-like but bipedal.
2. *Homo habilis* (about 2.4 to 1.4 million years ago) – first to use simple tools.
3. *Homo erectus* (about 1.9 million to 110,000 years ago) – migrated from Africa into Asia and Europe.
4. *Homo neanderthalensis* (Neanderthals) – lived in Europe and Western Asia until about 40,000 years ago.
5. *Homo sapiens* (modern humans) – emerged in Africa around 300,000 years ago and spread across the globe.

1.5 Relation to Modern Apes

1. Humans and chimpanzees are the closest living relatives.
2. Gorillas come next, followed by orangutans.
3. None of these are “direct ancestors” of humans; they are “evolutionary relatives,” all branching from a common ancestor.

1.6 Overall Sequence of Emergence

1. Microorganisms – about 3.5 to 4 billion years ago
2. Early marine animals – around 600 million years ago
3. Vertebrates and mammals – about 500 to 200 million years ago
4. Early hominins – about 6 to 7 million years ago
5. Modern humans (*Homo sapiens*) – about 300,000 years ago

Thus, animals (in the broad sense) appeared millions of years before humans, while life itself existed even earlier. Human societies have since passed through primitive communal life, slavery, feudalism, and capitalism. Capitalism, in particular, may be described as an age of heightened self-

awareness marked by profound alienation, bringing fundamental transformations in thought, life, society, and technology.

The inevitable rise of capitalism and the process of globalization have emerged from complex economic, social, and cultural transformations, whose defining characteristic has been commodification. At its core lies the relation “**money–commodity–money**”, which in its cyclical form appeared as “**commodity–money–commodity**.” From the outset, capitalism developed as an economic system based on private ownership and the production of consumer goods for a global market. In this context, both natural resources and human beings were transformed into commodities, valued solely for their capacity to generate profit. Over time, this process expanded, reducing humans and nature to convertible units of exchange, with all human needs presented to the market in the form of consumer goods.

Globalization has played a crucial role in this process: through advances in communication and transportation technologies, it has enabled free trade and extended commodification on a worldwide scale. As a result, nature and human beings are no longer understood simply as living entities and parts of an ecosystem, but as resources to be exploited for commodity production. Forests, water sources, fossil fuels, animals, and plants have become items for purchase and sale. Likewise, human labor itself has been commodified—people are not only employed as workers in the production of goods but their very bodies and minds are treated as rentable and exploitable economic forces.

This process perpetuates economic and social inequalities, since the real value of humans and nature is reduced to instruments for profit. Yet it must be remembered that humanity is part of nature. The commodification of both nature and humans, while turning them into instruments of production and consumption, overlooks the essential fact that human beings are not merely economic agents but biological and social entities deeply interconnected with nature. Nature must be understood not only as a source of raw materials and energy but also as humanity’s habitat and foundation of life. Any attempt to separate humans from nature, or to exploit its resources ruthlessly, results in environmental degradation that threatens both ecological balance and human well-being.

A rethinking of human–nature relations is therefore essential to achieve a sustainable and harmonious future. This text aims to trace the processes of commodification in their key forms—nature and humanity—through two major themes: commodification of the body and its parts (with particular emphasis on sexual commodification), and commodification of human relations.

1.7 Marx’s Pioneering Role in Environmental Economics

Although Karl Marx was not the first economist to speak about capitalism, the relationship between labor and employer, or even surplus value, without a doubt he was the only economist who managed to establish his influence in all three domains of **politics, philosophy, and economics**. The merit of Marx and Engels lay in their ability to analyze the relations of capitalism and to foresee its subsequent transformations that were, until then, hardly recognizable.

Marx wrote extensively on *Capital*. For contemporary Marxists, at least one of the definitions of *capital*—as private wealth—is clear. Whether this capital is in monetary or material form, and whether it belongs to an individual or a company, it possesses the power to generate surplus value. In capitalism, this surplus value is created through labor, produced by workers whose wages and benefits (such as education or healthcare purchased through taxation) are less than the total value of the commodities they produce. The surplus, as profit, is either consumed by the capitalist personally or reinvested to generate even greater wealth.

Much debate has surrounded this process, including the role of what Marx called *fictitious capital*—wealth derived from financial (or credit) transactions, or more simply, from ownership of land and housing (*fixed capital*), which generate additional value without the direct involvement of labor.

1.8 What is Natural Capital?

In recent years, traditional forms of economic capital (tangible and financial) have been joined by other categories. For example, sociologists speak of **human capital** (the knowledge and skills of individuals or groups) and **social capital** (networks of relationships or shared values and perceptions). These, however, are often complicated and problematic concepts. For instance, social capital is frequently portrayed as neutral, but in reality, it varies: a group of wealthy youths from private schools who sit on each other's corporate boards and share ownership is very different from socialists working collectively to build a better society.

Natural capital is even more complex and controversial. For Marxists, only two sources are fundamentally valuable: **nature and human labor**. The sole generator of *new* value is labor. Land, for Marx, could yield rent (a form of fictitious capital), but in and of itself it could not produce new value unless it became a foundation for labor—for example, through agricultural production.

In financialized capitalism, however, nature itself has become a central arena of capital accumulation. Its *exchange value* has been elevated without requiring the direct application of labor. From this shift, a new vocabulary has emerged. Green spaces, habitats, and ecosystems, along with the ability of biogeochemical cycles to absorb waste and maintain planetary balance, are now recast as providers of **ecosystem services**—long-term profit-bearing assets that, once quantified, can supposedly be substituted or offset.

Thus, the destruction of a forest, wetland, or river can be deemed acceptable, provided a compensatory asset is created elsewhere that offers equivalent “services,” ensuring a supposed *net zero loss*.

The conventional justification for environmental damage from business activity is to label such harm as an “externality” that is not factored into investment calculations. The usual solution, then, is to assign monetary value to “natural goods,” often estimated by public opinion, market performance (e.g., tourism income), or ecosystem functions.

But under financial capitalism, *actual markets* are engineered—for example, through tradable pollution rights (emissions trading schemes with regulatory frameworks) or offset markets.

Emissions trading allows companies to emit carbon dioxide and other pollutants up to a fixed quota, which can be bought and sold. Offset markets allow companies to purchase credits to “compensate” for damage by funding mitigation projects elsewhere.

Many corporations buy cheap credits—such as paying six British pounds per ton of CO₂—to claim carbon neutrality, often by financing dubious carbon capture schemes in developing countries. Such speculative practices—**monetizing, commodifying, and marketing nature**—are now promoted by official policy bodies and multinational corporations alike. The UK even has a “Natural Capital Committee.”

This reality goes far beyond what some critics call a “cultural poverty in the misuse of nature.” Carbon trading has become one of the most profitable global markets. The imperatives of growth in capitalism are deeply bound to financialization, debt, interest, and return on investment. This has given rise to a class of *diverted capital assets* whose very value depends on the continuation of environmentally destructive activity.

A river’s capacity to absorb waste is only “valuable” as long as pollution continues. A forest’s value as a carbon sink only exists as long as excessive carbon emissions persist.

As Ted Benton, Marxist sociologist and director of the Red-Green Study Group, has observed:

“In the UK there is near-total governmental consensus on the use of natural capital language among state agencies, NGOs, and large organizations—so much so that opposing it is barely seen as rational.”

The extraordinary result is that environmental protection is increasingly dependent on the very agents of ecological destruction. Natural capital (ecosystem services, offsets, and “net zero balance” schemes) has become normalized even among environmental NGOs. Organizations such as the International Union for Conservation of Nature now rely heavily on corporate investment, acting in practice as instruments allowing those corporations to claim “carbon neutrality.”

For example, in the UK, the corporation **Palladium**, through its “Revere” project, works with the Parks Authority, selling ecosystem services to companies wishing to offset their carbon emissions. Through funding reforestation, grassland restoration, wetlands, and coal mine rehabilitation, it provides biodiversity projects as compensatory measures. Similarly, the **Wildlife Trust**, through its subsidiary **Wilder Carbon**, sells carbon credits at over £45 per ton to British corporations. Their calculations suggest that semi-natural degraded habitats could offset 17 years of domestic, international, and even military aviation emissions—though nothing actually changes.

Such environmental organizations focus on their initial conservation aims, but simultaneously legitimize the ongoing pollution of the Earth by multinational corporations and financial institutions. At this point, it is clear that this system has brought the world to the brink of ecological catastrophe.

It is easy to be seduced by these new “green” discourses, but neither “**green capitalism**” nor individual lifestyle choices—both heavily promoted in the interests of corporations and finance—

represent genuine solutions to the greatest crisis of our time. Capitalism, by its very logic, is profit-driven and can take on many colors, but its structural imperative remains intact.

1.9 The Closing Circle

Marxist ecologist **Barry Commoner**, one of the founders of the modern environmental movement, wrote half a century ago in his book *The Closing Circle*:

“The world is being driven to the brink of ecological disaster, not merely by a problem that can be fixed with a clever solution, but by a powerful army of economic, political, and social forces that shape history itself. Anyone who proposes to solve the environmental crisis also commits to changing the course of history.”

Most activists today in groups such as *Extinction Rebellion* and *Insulate Britain*, and other ecological movements, would agree with this view over fifty years later.

This understanding links the environmental struggle with a broader grasp of the political economy of capitalism, the fight for genuine socialist policies, and the potential power of organized labor. Together, these offer at least some hope that change is possible.

The **biogeochemical cycle** refers to the circulation of molecules or chemical elements through living organisms (biosphere) and non-living systems (lithosphere, atmosphere, and hydrosphere). These cycles return matter to their starting point in a continuous loop.

However, production for greater yield and quicker profit—using chemical and industrial means—has led to the depletion of soil fertility. Unsurprisingly, soil contamination has worsened environmental degradation and undermined ecological harmony. Destruction of nature to create short-term economic opportunities may temporarily boost growth, but in the long run, it endangers both nature and humanity.

Polluting industries, war, poverty, racism, injustice, the expansion of the military-industrial and nuclear complex, rampant fossil fuel use, and widespread petrochemical production (such as plastics), combined with low levels of scientific and cultural awareness, have all contributed to the destruction of nature and ecosystems.

Nature, however, is a **circular system** in which all organisms, through cycles of creation and destruction, are ultimately recycled. Humanity is also an active part of this cycle. Thus, the destruction of nature leads inevitably to the destruction of humanity itself. Because ecological damage and climate warming now extend far beyond national or regional borders, the threat has become **global in scale**.

Therefore, the solution cannot be confined to either capitalism or socialism alone. It must instead be rooted in human foresight, ethical responsibility, knowledge and awareness, sustainable and balanced development, and in the material and energetic exchanges between human society and the natural world—in other words, in the **metabolism between humanity and nature**.

Marx's ecological perspective rested on historical conditions and the coevolution of society and nature. Two of its defining features were:

- the “**treadmill of production**”, describing capital's relentless drive to expand production endlessly for profit, regardless of natural limits; and
- the “**metabolic rift**”, describing the breakdown in the reciprocal exchange between humanity and nature under capitalism.

Together, these concepts illustrate that in Marx's view, humanity and nature form a single organic whole, where the survival of one depends upon the integrity of the other.

1.10 The Metabolic Rift

The **irreparable rift in the process of social metabolism**, often called the **metabolic rift**, is a key concept for understanding Marx's view of the ecological crisis under capitalism. John Bellamy Foster, in *Marx's Ecology: Materialism and Nature*, explains this as the complex and dynamic exchange of matter and energy between humans and nature that sustains production. For ecological preservation, what is required is a relationship free from human **alienation from nature**—for alienation from nature leads ultimately to alienation from the self.

Marx emphasized that there is a **dialectical relationship** between human society and nature: changes in nature bring changes in society, while destruction of nature inevitably results in the destruction of society and human life. He wrote:

“Labor is, first of all, a process between man and nature, a process by which man, through his own actions, mediates, regulates, and controls the metabolism between himself and nature. He confronts the materials of nature as a force of nature. He sets in motion the natural forces of his own body—arms, legs, head, and hands—in order to appropriate the materials of nature in a form adapted to his own needs.”

This relationship, Marx continued, manifests in two ways: first, in the human drive to liberate themselves from the constraints of nature; second, in an evolutionary engagement that sees nature not as an enemy to be conquered but as the very foundation of human life—a view Marx shared with Charles Darwin.

Engels also described three forms of metabolism: (1) **organic metabolism**, within the living body, essential to sustaining life; (2) **inorganic metabolism**, occurring in nonliving nature; and (3) **exchange metabolism**, the interaction between living organisms and their natural environment, producing constant changes in both.

With the evolution of human organs—especially the brain—humans acquired greater mastery over nature. This co-development of **genes and culture** meant that cultural growth and biological evolution advanced in tandem. Anthropologist Lewis H. Morgan's studies of technological evolution, later used by Engels in *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State*,

revealed that human history can be understood as the joint development of tools, production, and human beings themselves.

For Marx and Engels, nature was the precondition of human existence, and the production of tools was the precondition of continued life. Thus, human history is marked by an **organic unity of humanity and nature**. Harmony ensures survival; disharmony creates alienation from nature. Modern science calls this balance the **ecosystem**. Marx saw tools and technologies as extensions of the human body—whether a hammer, an eyeglass, or a spacecraft, all are transformations of nature that amplify human capacities, for creation or destruction alike.

In this sense, nature is humanity’s “inorganic body.” Through production, humans constantly transform this inorganic body into an extension of their organic being. Consequently, ecological destruction is not simply the ruin of the environment, but a wound inflicted on humanity itself.

1.11 Engels on the Destruction of Nature

Engels offered remarkably prescient ecological insights in *Dialectics of Nature* and *Anti-Dühring*, which align closely with modern ideas of sustainability. He described nature as a testing ground for dialectics, arguing:

“Natural science proves that, in the final analysis, nature’s processes are dialectical, not metaphysical.”

This dialectical view showed the **reciprocal relation between humans and nature**, where every transformation humans impose on the environment eventually rebounds on them. Engels warned:

“Let us not, however, flatter ourselves overmuch on account of our human victories over nature. For each such victory, nature takes its revenge on us.”

He cited historical examples: deforestation in ancient Greece, Mesopotamia, and Asia Minor destroyed reservoirs of moisture, leading to desertification. Overuse of forests in the Italian Alps dried up springs, ruined dairy production, and created floods downstream. Spanish coffee planters in Cuba, who burned forests for quick soil fertility, later saw tropical rains wash away the unprotected topsoil, leaving only barren rock.

Engels stressed that humans are not external conquerors of nature but **part of it—flesh, blood, bone, and mind interwoven with it**. The only true human advantage lies in understanding nature’s laws and applying them wisely.

Marx and Engels thus anticipated the ecological catastrophes of unregulated industrialism. Tragically, their socialist successors often ignored these warnings. In the USSR and Eastern Bloc, rapid industrialization pursued under authoritarian rule repeated the same mistakes as capitalism—leading to ecological disasters and the discrediting of socialism itself. In their zeal to demonstrate superiority over capitalism, regimes sacrificed the environment, silenced dissenters as “enemies of the people,” and undermined the very legitimacy of their political systems.

1.12 Marxism and the Ecological Question in the Soviet Union

In *Marx's Ecology*, John Bellamy Foster highlights Marx's sensitivity to the environment, countering claims that Marx saw labor alone as the source of wealth. For Marx, both **labor and nature** were sources of value. In his critique of the **Gotha Program**, Marx explicitly rejected Ferdinand Lassalle's formulation that "labor is the source of all wealth." Marx responded:

"Labor is not the source of all wealth. Nature is just as much the source of use-values (and it is surely of such that material wealth consists!) as labor, which itself is only the manifestation of a natural force, human labor power."

This passage makes clear that Marx recognized nature's indispensable role alongside labor in the creation of wealth.

Critics such as Anthony Giddens and Michael Radcliffe argue that Marxism's focus on production and growth placed it in opposition to ecological sustainability. Yet Paul Burkett, in *Marx and Nature: A Red and Green Perspective*, dismisses such criticisms, noting that Marx's materialism emphasized the co-dependence of labor and nature. Common misreadings portray Marx as "Promethean"—championing domination over nature, reducing nature's role in production, and disconnecting ecological crises from capitalist contradictions. Burkett insists these critiques misrepresent Marx.

The **Soviet experience**, however, complicates matters. As Daniel Kull (Indiana University) points out, socialist states often downplayed ecological protection, fearing it might reduce industrial output or employment. Consequently, environmental issues were marginalized or ignored. Industrial overproduction, combined with authoritarian suppression of criticism, deepened ecological disasters in the Eastern Bloc.

Yet this outcome reflected the **betrayal of Marx's ecological insights, not their application**. Italian geographer Massimo Quaini reminds us: "Long before a modern bourgeois ecological consciousness was born, Marx condemned the destruction of nature."

For Marx, industrial development under capitalism was destructive because it violated the conditions of nature. Industrialization in the hands of workers, however, could serve as the key to prosperity, ecological balance, and liberation from alienation.

1.13 Eco-Socialism or Green Socialism

Eco-socialism is a relatively recent movement concerning the environment. It represents a synthesis of socialist principles with the politics of the Green movement, aimed at protecting the environment and addressing the consequences of globalization. According to eco-socialists, the expansion of the capitalist system—through globalization and imperialism under the control of repressive states and transnational structures—has led to social alienation, poverty, war, and environmental destruction.

Within the broader socialist spectrum, eco-socialism reopens debates not only between opponents and advocates of socialism but also over the very relationship between humans and nature. Canadian eco-socialist and critical left philosopher **Ian Angus** notes:

“Future history will assign double importance to eco-socialism: it begins with a critical view of both its parents—environmentalism and Marxism. At a time when human action can undermine the very foundations of life, this effort seeks to construct the best ecological insight, combined with Marxist criticism of capitalism based on the dual exploitation of labor and nature.”

Eco-socialism is not a party, nor a new political ideology, but rather a movement that seeks to bring environmentalists closer to socialism and socialists closer to environmental protection. As Angus puts it, it aims to “make the reds greener and the greens redder.” It also arises as a response to orthodox Marxist currents hesitant to update their analysis, as well as to the ecological devastation caused by the failures of socialism in the Eastern Bloc.

American Green Party member and eco-socialist theorist **Joel Kovel** criticizes John Bellamy Foster’s view that Marx’s ecological insights have remained underexplored. Kovel argues that while Marx did see humanity as part of nature, humans are the active agent of transformation: nature, in this sense, is passive material transformed through labor. Foster counters, insisting that for Marx the relationship was **dialectical and reciprocal**—alienation from labor was inseparable from alienation from nature. Darwin’s materialist conception of nature, Marx believed, revealed a constant interaction between natural and historical conditions.

Foster also responds to **Paul Burkett** (author of *Marx and Nature: A Red and Green Perspective*), affirming that both share the conviction that Marx’s insights remain a crucial guide for rescuing nature from capitalism—yet Foster stresses that no nineteenth-century analysis, however brilliant, can by itself resolve twenty-first century crises like global climate change, ocean acidification, or fracking.

While Marx and Engels offered essential critiques of capitalism’s ecological destruction, socialist regimes often failed to heed these warnings, repeating the same errors in their rush for industrial output. **Simon Butler** therefore reminds us:

“Today’s Marxists must learn from the mistakes of the twentieth century. The ecological foundations in Marx’s thought pointed toward reducing environmental harm, but too many socialists ignored this. Marxists of the twenty-first century must be part of the movements resisting climate change and ecological breakdown, which are fast becoming existential threats to humanity.”

French Marxist **Michael Löwy** similarly emphasizes that ecological questions pose a profound challenge to renewing Marxist thought. Twentieth-century Marxists—including even anti-Stalinists—tended to equate progress with expanded productive forces. By contrast, Löwy argues that today’s Marxists must prioritize constructive social transformation over mere economic growth.

Within Bolshevism, **Nikolai Bukharin** was among the first to take ecological issues seriously. Celebrated by Lenin as the “greatest theorist” and “golden boy of the revolution,” Bukharin explored the **metabolism between society and nature** in his 1921 writings on historical materialism. Even in Stalin’s prison in 1938, he wrote philosophical works stressing that humanity is both a product of nature and part of it—and warning that without harmony with its environment, society would collapse into dust.

In European social democracy, **Karl Kautsky** (in *The Agrarian Question*, 1899) raised concerns about the use of chemical fertilizers, while **Rosa Luxemburg** highlighted the disappearance of bird species in Germany, the ecological harm faced by Native Americans, and the destructive consequences of capitalist industrialization. By contrast, figures like **Georg Lukács** and **Antonio Gramsci** dismissed environmental concerns, attacking Bukharin and Engels for giving “primacy to natural science” over production relations. For Lukács, Bukharin was a positivist who betrayed historical materialism. This culturalist critique, however, ignored Marx’s own conception of metabolism between humans and nature.

Notably, early Soviet ecologists like **N. I. Vavilov** and **V. I. Vernadsky**, under Lenin’s and later Bukharin’s support in the 1920s, pursued ecological protection at a time when no comparable efforts existed in the capitalist West.

1.14 Karl Polanyi’s Perspective

In his classic work *The Great Transformation*, **Karl Polanyi** is considered one of the founders of modern debates on the “commodification of nature.” He introduced the concept of “**fictitious commodities**”, explaining that capitalism organizes **labor, land (nature), and money** as if they were ordinary commodities—though they are not inherently so.

- **Nature as a fictitious commodity:** Land and ecosystems are not human-made products, yet the market assigns them prices and treats them as if they were tradeable objects (farmland, forests, water rights, clean air). This is, Polanyi argued, an artificial transformation that subordinates ecological and social logics to the profit motive.
- **Consequences:** Environmental destruction, social instability, and the erosion of cultural ties to land.
- **Double movement:** Polanyi proposed that society always resists full commodification: markets push to extend commodification, while states, communities, and movements push back with regulation and protection.
- **Relation to Marxism:** Unlike Marx, Polanyi emphasized the *social and institutional consequences* of commodification more than production relations or surplus value. Yet both agreed that treating nature as a commodity has catastrophic human and ecological consequences.

1.15 Comparative Table of Thinkers on Society and the Environment

Thinker	Key Works	Theoretical Approach	Commodification of Nature	Driving Mechanisms	Core Concepts	Environmental/Social Consequences	Critique of Market Solutions	Alternatives
Karl Marx	<i>Capital</i> ; Manuscripts	Historical materialism; critique of value	Nature reduced to a “free gift to capital”; use-value subordinated to exchange-value	Private property, primitive accumulation, labor exploitation	Metabolic rift, surplus value	Soil exhaustion, deforestation, alienation	Carbon markets mask exploitation	Socialized production, democratic planning, metabolic restoration
Karl Polanyi	<i>The Great Transformation</i>	Historical institutionalism; double movement	Land as fictitious commodity	Market self-regulation extended to natural/social	Double movement, embeddedness	Ecological/social erosion, instability	Market-based valuation without safeguards is dangerous	Strong regulation, social/environmental protection
John Bellamy Foster	<i>Ecological Rift</i> ; MR essays	Marxist ecology	Extends “metabolic rift”; capitalism disrupts ecological cycles	Industrial treadmill, capitalist agriculture	Ecological rift, ecological imperialism	Climate change, extinction, soil loss	Rejects carbon trading; calls for structural change	Eco-socialism: sustainable planning, ecological democracy
Nikolai Bukharin	<i>Imperialism and World Economy</i> ; <i>Historical Materialism</i>	Marxism-Leninism; imperialism theory	Nature subsumed under finance/monopoly capital	Expansionary needs of capital, resource extraction	Imperialism, financialization	Resource plunder, pollution across borders	Skeptical of environmental markets as imperial tools	Rational socialist planning, public ownership of resources
Michael Parenti	<i>Earth Under Siege</i>	Critical political economy	Nature commodified by corporate-state nexus	Transnational corporate power, privatization	Environmental imperialism	Toxic dumping in Global South, inequality	Sees carbon trading as greenwashing	Grassroots movements, global environmental justice
Naomi Klein	<i>This Changes Everything</i> ; <i>Shock Doctrine</i>	Anti-neoliberal critique; climate justice	Neoliberalism converts nature into assets for profit	Free trade, deregulation, fossil fuel subsidies	Climate justice, “Keep it in the ground”	Global warming, ecological disasters, inequality	Deeply skeptical of carbon markets	Just transition, rapid fossil fuel phaseout, public green investment

1.16 Points of Convergence

- **Skepticism toward market valuation of nature:** All agree (to varying degrees) that commodifying ecosystems through pricing schemes fails to solve crises, often worsening them.
- **Structural link between capitalism and ecological destruction:** Marx and Foster frame this as the **metabolic rift**; Polanyi as the overextension of markets to fictitious commodities; Klein, Parenti, and Bukharin emphasize corporate/imperial structures.
- **Need for institutional transformation:** From strong regulation and social protections (Polanyi, Klein, Parenti) to socialist or democratic ecological planning (Marx, Foster, Bukharin).

1.17 Key Facts of Environmental Commodification

- Each year, **11 billion tons of goods** are shipped by sea; **10.3 billion tons** by rail; and **66 million metric tons** by air.
- Roughly **40 million flights** occur annually, averaging **100,000 flights per day**, with a global fleet of **25,500 airplanes**.
- **159 billion parcels** were shipped in 2022.
- World trade grew from **\$318 billion in 1971** to **\$22.5 trillion in 2022** (a 70-fold increase).

- Global GDP rose from **\$3 trillion in 1971** to **\$109 trillion in 2024**, with population doubling from 3.7 to 8.1 billion. Production has thus outpaced population growth, resulting in global **overproduction**.
- **40% of the world's land surface** (30% farmland, 10% pasture) is degraded. Drylands have expanded by 1% over 50 years—if trends continue, an area the size of South America will be lost by 2050.
- Environmental disasters: Bhopal chemical explosion in India, Gulf of Mexico oil spill.
- Nuclear and industrial waste dumping in oceans and developing countries has been catastrophic.
- Major drivers: global transport emissions, nuclear tests, ocean dumping of satellites.
- Despite globalization's chronic overproduction, transnational corporations continue to expand output, intensifying greenhouse emissions.
- **13 billion devices** connected to the internet in 2022; projected **100 billion by 2050**, requiring massive energy and exacerbating ecological strain.
- By 2050: world economy will more than double, population will grow by 2 billion, but energy demand will fall 8% due to renewables providing ~90% of power. Solar and wind will supply 70%, nuclear most of the rest; fossil fuels will shrink to 20%.
- Yet geopolitical crises (COVID-19, Ukraine war) have reignited coal use, undermining climate goals.
- **Land degradation** affects 2 billion hectares, directly impacting 1.5 billion people. Each year, **24 billion tons of fertile soil** are lost, degrading **12 million hectares** of land—equivalent to **23 hectares per minute**.
- Arctic summer ice will likely vanish within years, signaling runaway climate tipping points.
- Wetlands have lost **87% of their global extent** in 300 years; 54% since 1900, mostly in Southeast Asia and the Congo basin.
- Land degradation costs **\$40 trillion annually** in lost ecosystem services—about **37% of global GDP**.
- Desertification could displace **250 million people by 2050**.
- To avert catastrophe, immediate action is needed: developed economies must cut emissions drastically, while developing nations must pursue sustainable policies, rejecting fossil-fueled overproduction. Organic farming, renewable energy, and structural change are indispensable.

Part Two – The Process of Commodifying Nature and Humanity

2.1 Historical Introduction: From Matrilineality to Patriarchy

The history of humanity and its social life goes back nearly one million years. For the overwhelming majority of this time—except for the last six thousand years—human societies were organized around **matrilineal systems**, in which women and men enjoyed freedom and equality in their relationships. Only in the last six millennia, with the rise of patriarchy, did these relations become restricted, reducing women to the status of subordinates to men.

In matrilineal systems, freedom extended not only to sexual relations but also to other aspects of life. Today, women make up nearly **49.73% of the global population**—approximately 4.01 billion out of 8.06 billion people. Women’s labor force participation rate, which stood at 33.2% in 1955, has reached **48.3% in 2024**, compared to 73% for men. It is notable that the highest recorded rate of female labor participation was in the year 2000 at 60%.

Dictatorship, repression, torture, addiction, prostitution, theft, imprisonment, and sexual violence against women—all hallmarks of “civilization”—are phenomena of these last six thousand years. Early humans, though materially less advanced, enjoyed far more democratic and humane social and sexual relations.

The **patriarchal revolution** and the establishment of private property roughly six thousand years ago constituted the greatest upheaval in human history—though also the most destructive and anti-human. Contemporary civilization is built on this revolution, and its darker legacies persist in the suffering of today’s societies. Historical records of this transition have often been suppressed, precisely because knowledge of it would threaten the very foundations of existing social orders. In this sense, rediscovering these origins remains vital for human self-understanding.

In its earliest stages, capitalism focused on the production and exchange of material goods. Yet in its advanced or post-capitalist phase, the logic of the market extends into spheres once thought beyond commerce: the human body, emotions, sexuality, and even biological capacities. This process, described in critical theory as **commodification**, has become a defining feature of globalization and contemporary capitalism.

Marx observed that **Epicurus** revealed humanity’s alienation from nature, while **Hegel** highlighted its alienation from labor. Marx himself demonstrated the decisive link between these phenomena, showing how the relationship between humans and nature is mediated through labor. As a fierce critic of capitalism, Marx was deeply concerned with humanity’s relationship to nature, which he regarded as an integral part of human existence.

Marx and Engels foresaw that the **drive for ever-greater production** would compel societies to exploit nature, even at the cost of ecological destruction. This was justified through several logics:

1. **Anthropocentrism** – the belief that nature exists solely for human use, supported by the false claim that “man is the crown of creation.”

2. **Ignorance and necessity** – in earlier periods, limited knowledge forced humans to exploit nature destructively for survival.
3. **Ideological competition** – states and systems sought to prove their superiority by extracting maximum resources, regardless of environmental cost.
4. **Capitalist greed** – the insatiable drive for profit and accumulation fueled pollution, deforestation, and industrial devastation.

In this context, the role of **independent civil society organizations** to protect nature is indispensable. Without them, states and corporations prioritize private interests over the common good. Marx rejected both anthropocentrism and “nature-centrism” as dualistic frameworks. For him, **humanity and nature form a unified whole**, connected through labor and historical development. He coined the term “**metabolic relations**” to describe this organic, dialectical process: the ongoing exchange that sustains life itself.

At the 1992 **Earth Summit**, sustainable development was defined as “meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.” The World Commission on Environment and Development elaborated that sustainable development requires changes in resource use, investment patterns, technological orientation, and institutional reform to balance present and future needs.

The German chemist **Justus von Liebig** was among the first to warn about soil degradation, criticizing modern agriculture as a “**system of robbery**” that undermines natural cycles of fertility. He observed how urbanization severed the organic metabolic exchange between humans and the soil, as nutrients consumed in cities failed to return to farmland, instead polluting rivers as waste. This disruption, intensified by capitalist commodification of agriculture, he predicted, could ultimately lead to civilizational collapse.

Thus, while short-term industrial and chemical intensification boosts yields, it simultaneously erodes soil fertility, pollutes ecosystems, and destabilizes the **ecological balance**. Destructive industries, war, poverty, racism, injustice, militarization, nuclear development, fossil fuel dependency, plastics, and cultural ignorance—all contribute to the degradation of nature. Since humanity itself is part of this ecological cycle, **the destruction of nature is ultimately the destruction of humanity**.

2.2 The Concept of Commodification in Capitalism

In capitalism, the fundamental logic of economic and social life revolves around **production, exchange, and accumulation of capital**. As Marx outlined in *Capital*, this logic extends beyond material goods to encompass all aspects of life—nature, human relations, and even emotions.

Commodification is the process by which something once outside the market is transformed into a commodity, valued not for its intrinsic or cultural worth but solely for its **exchange value**.

In today’s world, human relations increasingly resemble a bustling marketplace where individuals are valued not for their humanity but for their “price tags.” Love and intimacy are reduced to transactions measured in beauty, wealth, or social status.

Consumption itself is natural and necessary, yet when it becomes excessive and compulsive, life itself turns into a commodity. Individuals become dependent on material objects rather than meaningful relationships. With neoliberal globalization, this process has intensified: capitalism now commodifies both **human beings and nature** on a planetary scale.

Despite international conferences on environmental sustainability, **corporate states** continue to pursue ecologically destructive mass production. For example, during the Ukraine war, U.S. oil corporations earned over **\$200 billion** in profits, even as fossil fuel industries remain among the most polluting on Earth.

This contradiction reveals the crisis: while human economies rely fundamentally on natural resources, mainstream economic theories deliberately omit these material limits. Addressing climate change thus requires **radical systemic change**, not superficial reforms.

2.3 Marx's Perspective: Capitalism as a Machine of Commodification

Marx argued that capitalism survives only by **expanding the scope of commodification**, which unfolds along two primary axes:

1. Commodification of Nature

- Land, forests, minerals, water, soil, and even air become private property.
- Nature is valued by profitability, not ecological importance.
- Private property, one of capitalism's three income sources (alongside capital and labor), legitimizes relentless resource exploitation.
- True sustainability requires not just reorganizing capitalism but establishing a **genuinely ecological civilization** that coexists with natural systems.

2. Commodification of Humanity

- Labor power becomes a unique commodity traded in labor markets.
- Workers experience alienation from their work, products, and even themselves.
- In advanced stages, capitalism commodifies not only labor but also human biology and emotions—from organ sales to digital data exploitation.

2.4 Engels and the Ecological Dimension of Commodification

Engels highlighted how capitalism devastates both **workers and ecosystems**. In *Dialectics of Nature*, he argued that reckless exploitation of resources inevitably disrupts ecological balance. The capitalist obsession with short-term profit prevents long-term ecological preservation.

2.5 Lukács and the Theory of “Reification”

Hungarian Marxist **Georg Lukács** deepened this critique with his concept of **reification** (*Verdinglichung*):

- Social relations appear as object-like relations between things.
- Both nature and humanity are reduced to commodities with price tags.
- This leads individuals to perceive themselves as “objects,” stripping social life of its human meaning.

2.6 David Harvey and “Accumulation by Dispossession”

Marxist geographer **David Harvey** described commodification through the concept of **accumulation by dispossession**:

- Public goods such as water, land, and digital data are seized and privatized.
- This includes widespread privatization, commercialization of social services, and encroachment on natural commons.
- Examples: privatization of water in Bolivia, Amazon deforestation for agribusiness, and monetization of user data by Big Tech.

2.7 Eco-Marxism and John Bellamy Foster

Eco-Marxists like **John Bellamy Foster** emphasize the **metabolic rift**: capitalism interrupts the organic exchange of materials and energy between humanity and nature, depleting ecosystems rather than renewing them.

Foster outlines sixteen **revolutionary ecological measures**, including: halting growth in wealthy nations, eliminating fossil fuels, redistributing wealth, building circular economies, cutting military spending, restoring ecosystems, and banning water privatization. These proposals serve as a **manifesto for ecological revolution**.

2.8 Silvia Federici and the Commodification of Women’s Bodies

Feminist Marxist **Silvia Federici** shows how capitalism commodifies women’s bodies and reproductive labor:

- Unpaid domestic work underpins labor force reproduction.
- Women’s bodies are subjected to market logic in surrogacy, pornography, and beauty industries.
- This results in **dual exploitation**—as workers and as women.

2.9 Nancy Fraser and the Crisis of Social Reproduction

Critical theorist **Nancy Fraser** argues that capitalism faces a **crisis of social reproduction**:

- Childcare, education, and eldercare—once non-commodified—are now absorbed into the market.
- This erodes human solidarity while intensifying burdens on vulnerable groups, especially women.

2.10 Sex: From a Tool of Survival to an Expression of Emotion and Human Connection

2.10.1 Sex in Early Human Societies: A Tool of Survival and Reproduction

In the earliest stages of human life, sexual relations served primarily as a **biological and evolutionary function**: reproduction and survival.

- Among hunter-gatherer societies, sex was directly tied to reproduction.
- Physical attraction and biological signals (such as scent, voice, or displays of strength and health) guided mate selection.
- At this stage, no complex cultural or religious frameworks around sex existed; instinct and biological necessity were the determining factors.

2.10.2 The Transition to Agricultural Societies: The Rise of Rules and Symbols

With the emergence of agriculture and permanent settlements, sexuality entered new frameworks:

- Social and familial control over mate choice increased.
- Marriage and property systems linked sex to economic and social structures.
- Religious and ritual beliefs about sex emerged, often symbolizing fertility and agricultural abundance (e.g., fertility goddesses in Mesopotamia and the Mediterranean).

2.10.3 Sex as the Expression of Innate Desire and Emotion

Beyond its biological role, sexuality has always been connected to **emotion, love, and human inclination**:

- Evolutionary psychology shows that emotional bonds between partners increased the survival chances of offspring.
- Sex became a means of strengthening emotional ties, beyond reproduction alone.
- Sexual pleasure and intimacy fulfilled essential human needs throughout history.

2.10.4 Sex in Symbolism and Culture

In many cultures, sex acquired symbolic and cultural meanings:

- A symbol of love, union, and spiritual transcendence in literature and art.
- In certain mystical traditions (such as Tantra in India), sex is viewed as a pathway to awareness and spiritual union.
- In modern societies, sex is an expression of **personal identity and orientation**.

Thus, from its earliest role as a biological tool for survival, sex has evolved into a symbol of love, intimacy, and human identity—an enduring fusion of instinct and emotion that has persisted throughout history.

2.11 Reflections on the Diversity of Sexual Practices in History

From a biological perspective, sexual reproduction existed among animals millions of years ago, though most species are limited to one or two mating positions dictated by their anatomy (e.g., most mammals reproduce in a dorsal or rear-entry position).

With the evolution of early hominins, particularly **Homo erectus** (about 1.8 million years ago), upright posture, flexible pelvises, and free hands enabled greater **variety in sexual positions**.

Archaeological and artistic evidence, such as cave paintings and Neolithic figurines (10,000–12,000 years ago), depict sexual practices. Ancient civilizations—including Sumer, Egypt, India, and Greece—produced texts and images about sexual techniques.

The **Kama Sutra** (India, 3rd–5th centuries CE) was among the first written texts to systematically describe over 60 positions. While sexual activity as reproduction dates back millions of years, the **conscious cultural diversification of sexual practices** likely began tens of thousands of years ago, later documented in texts and art, particularly in the last two to three millennia.

2.12 Liquid Love, Consumerism, and the Commodification of Humans

“**Liquid love**” refers to relationships that are short-term and fragile, formed to fulfill immediate emotional and physical needs rather than long-term commitments.

Sociologist **Zygmunt Bauman**, in *Liquid Love*, describes this phenomenon as a product of **endless individualism in a fluid modern world**. People both crave connection and fear lasting commitments. Relationships thus become calculated, unstable, and easily dissolved—marriage itself seen as a returnable commodity.

Bauman argues that consumerism fuels this model:

- In modern culture, value is placed on **consumption itself**, and this logic extends from commodities to human relationships.
- Love becomes temporary, subject to “expiration dates,” just like consumer goods.
- The more people adopt a commodified view of others, the more love becomes liquid.

He likens modern love to “**pocket relationships**”—relationships taken out for use when needed, then tucked away when no longer useful. The romantic notion of “till death do us part” has been replaced by **trial-like connections**, dissolved at the first sign of dissatisfaction.

Bauman further compares love in modernity to **investment in the stock market**: people continually reassess their relationships, uncertain whether to “hold” or “sell.” This insecurity erodes trust, rationality, and stability, and sometimes escalates to conflict or even violence.

2.12.1 Links Between Liquid Love, Fashion, and Branding

- **Fashion:** As fashion trends change rapidly, so too do relationships—short-lived, replaceable, and novelty-driven.
- **Branding:** Just as brands compete for consumer attention, new romantic opportunities continuously challenge existing ties, encouraging disposability.

2.12.2 The Temptation of Freedom

As Marx noted, in modernity “all that is solid melts into air.” The fluidity of modern life creates a sense of freedom, but also insecurity. Unlike the binding commitments of the past, modern relationships allow constant change and novelty—yet also leave individuals uncertain whether today’s love will survive tomorrow.

2.13 The Art of Loving

Erich Fromm, a thinker of the Frankfurt School, argued in *The Art of Loving* (1956): “Love is not something natural. It requires discipline, concentration, patience, faith, and overcoming narcissism. It is not a feeling, it is a practice.”

Fromm distinguished between **immature and mature love**:

- Immature love says: “*I love you because I need you.*”
- Mature love says: “*I need you because I love you.*”

For Fromm, immature love is bound to **narcissism and transactional exchange**, where both self and partner are commodified. Modern understandings of romance often fall into this category, institutionalizing commodified, immature love.

He argued that overcoming this requires viewing love not as a commodity but as an **art**—something cultivated through practice and discipline. The more one trains in the art of love, the deeper its value becomes.

2.14 Broader Consequences of Commodification

2.14.1 For Nature

- Ecological destruction and loss of biodiversity
- Widespread pollution of air, water, and soil
- Intensification of climate crises

2.14.2 For Humanity

- Alienation and loss of human identity
- Job burnout and reduced quality of life
- Reduction of biological, emotional, and social aspects of life into profit tools

2.14.3 For Society

- Growing class inequality
- Concentration of wealth and power in the hands of a minority
- Erosion of collective values, replaced by extreme individualism

As Marx and subsequent Marxists demonstrated, commodification is inherent to the logic of capitalism. It not only exploits workers but also subjugates nature and human relations to market forces. Resisting it requires alternative systems that prioritize **human, environmental, and collective values** over short-term profit.

2.15 The Commodification of Nature

Before the human body was commodified, **nature itself was the first victim of the market logic:**

- **Water** has become a tradable financial asset (e.g., the California water futures market).
- **Air and carbon** are bought and sold through carbon credit systems.
- **Seeds and genes** are patented by multinational corporations, forcing farmers to pay royalties.

The ideology that “everything can be bought and sold” laid the groundwork for the commodification of the human body and emotions.

2.16 Commodification of the Human Body

2.16.1 The Sale of Organs

- In countries such as **Iran, Pakistan, India, Brazil, and the Philippines**, the sale of kidneys has developed into a semi-formal or informal market.
- In Brazil, some private hospitals secretly collaborate with brokers to sell the organs of poor patients to wealthy buyers from inside and outside the country (including Israeli patients and those from the Gulf states).
- A legal paradox exists: the sale of kidneys is tolerated as a “life-saving act,” while the sale of sexual services is criminalized—even though both involve selling parts of the body for money.

2.16.2 The Sex Industry

- **Nordic model** (Sweden, Norway, Canada): selling sex is not criminalized, but buying it is.
- **Full legalization model** (Netherlands, Germany): sex work is officially regulated, with health insurance, taxation, and medical checkups.
- **Full criminalization** (Iran and many Islamic countries): both parties are punished.
- **Reality on the ground:** even in countries with prohibitions, massage parlors and clubs often function as legal covers for sex work.

2.16.3 Surrogacy, Sperm, and Egg Sales

- **Surrogacy:** common in the U.S., Ukraine, Georgia, and formerly in India. Costs range from \$30,000 to \$150,000 per pregnancy.
- **Sperm:** sold in U.S., Danish, and Canadian sperm banks for between \$50 and several thousand dollars per sample.
- **Eggs:** extraction is medically risky and costly, priced between \$5,000 and \$15,000 per cycle.
- **Critique:** these practices exploit poor women and reduce pregnancy to a commercial transaction.

2.17 Commodification of Desire and Emotion

2.17.1 The Pornography Industry

- Estimated global value: **\$97 to \$172 billion**.
- Major centers: United States, Japan, and Europe.

2.17.2 Sex Tech and Sex Dolls

- Includes devices, robots, and apps designed to simulate sexual experiences.
- The global market for sex dolls is expected to exceed **\$40 billion by 2030**.

2.17.3 Paid Relationship Platforms

- Platforms such as **OnlyFans** have transformed intimate and sexual relations into subscription-based services.
- Thousands of people earn their living through such platforms.

2.17.4 Regional Sex Work Markets

Country	Legal Status	Features
UAE	Prohibited	Luxury sex tourism in Dubai; women from Russia, Africa, and Asia
Oman	Prohibited	Small market; primarily African and Asian women in Muscat
Iraqi Kurdistan	Prohibited	Underground activity in Erbil and Sulaymaniyah; women from Iran and Syria
Turkey	Legal with permit	State-regulated brothels (<i>genelev</i>); large informal market with migrants
Germany	Fully legal	Largest market in Europe; regulated with insurance and taxation
Netherlands (Red Light)	Fully legal	Amsterdam's <i>vitruines</i> ; tourist attraction under official regulation

2.18 Africa: War Rape and Poverty as Engines of the Sex Market

- In conflicts and tribal wars (Congo, South Sudan, Rwanda, Somalia, Ethiopia), **rape is used as a weapon of war**.
- In impoverished areas of Ethiopia, mothers and daughters stand together outside homes to attract clients.
- Refugee camps have become hubs for networks of sexual exploitation.

2.19 The Virginity Market

- Virginity is sold on the black market or via online auctions as a rare commodity.
- Example: **Catarina Migliorini** from Brazil sold her virginity to a South Korean businessman for \$800,000.
- Buyers are typically Arab sheikhs, Asian billionaires, and Western capitalists.
- Human rights activists describe this as the most extreme form of commodifying the body.

2.20 Child Marriage: Institutionalized Prostitution under the Cover of Marriage

- In Afghanistan, Yemen, Pakistan, and certain traditional Arab countries, marriages of girls aged **8–12** to men aged **50–70** are legally or customarily accepted.
- These marriages effectively transfer ownership of the child's body to the husband in exchange for money or dowry.
- Consequences: severe physical harm, depression, school dropout, intergenerational poverty, and **PTSD (Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder)**.

2.21 Zoophilia: Sexual Abuse of Animals as a “Third World Case”

In many rural or tribal communities of the Global South, where premarital relations are strictly forbidden and sexual education is absent, frustration sometimes leads to practices that are both morally reprehensible and biologically abusive. One such case is **zoophilia**—sexual intercourse between humans and domestic animals.

2.21.1 Social and Cultural Context

- **Restricted human relations:** premarital relations are forbidden and punished.
- **Geographic isolation:** shepherds and herders spend days or weeks alone in remote pastures.
- **Lack of sex education:** ignorance pushes people toward deviant practices.

2.21.2 Behavioral Patterns

- Common animals: sheep, goats, donkeys, and horses.
- Methods: tying the animal to prevent movement or kicking; use of stools with larger animals.
- Carried out secretly, away from public view.

2.21.3 Health and Biological Risks

- Transmission of zoonotic diseases (e.g., brucellosis, parasites).
- Physical and psychological harm to animals.

2.21.4 Analysis in the Framework of Commodification

- The animal's body is reduced to a tool for human gratification, without consent and regardless of harm.
- While criminalized in developed countries, in parts of the Global South it remains a "hidden secret of the village."

2.21.5 Key Critiques

1. Alienation from one's body and desires (Marx, Marcuse).
2. The market as the measure of morality.
3. New forms of exploitation of the poor for the benefit of the wealthy.

2.22 Market Values of Related Sectors

Sector	Estimated Global Value	Major Countries
Prostitution	~\$100 billion	Germany, Netherlands, Thailand, Turkey
Pornography	\$97–170 billion	U.S., Japan, EU
Surrogacy	\$30,000–150,000 per birth	U.S., Ukraine, Georgia
Sperm sales	\$50–3,000 per sample	U.S., Denmark, Canada
Egg sales	\$5,000–15,000 per cycle	U.S., Spain, Ukraine
Sex dolls	~\$40 billion (by 2030)	China, Japan
SexTech	~\$108 billion (by 2030)	U.S., Japan, South Korea
Organ sales	Variable	Iran, Pakistan, India, Brazil

Part Three – The Framework of Family Transformation

3.1 Introduction

Before the period of matriarchy—usually described in anthropological literature as matrilineal and mother-centered family structures—the forms of family in early human societies were very different from later models. Based on archaeological and anthropological research, and on the analysis of **Marx and Engels** in *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State* (drawing on the work of Lewis H. Morgan), this era can be described as a decisive transition: the shift from matrilineal and mother-centered structures to patriarchy was one of the greatest social transformations in human history.

Anthropologists such as **Lewis Henry Morgan**, **Johann Jakob Bachofen**, and the Marx–Engels framework emphasize that this change was directly linked to the rise of private property, the emergence of the state, and the formation of social classes. This transition not only restructured power and the economy but also transformed human relations with the body, gender, and sexuality.

3.1.1 Historical Context

- This stage largely corresponds to the **hunter-gatherer era**, before the agricultural revolution (around 10,000–12,000 years ago).
- Humans lived in **small groups** (20–50 members), organized as primitive communes.
- Tools of production were simple, and **private property did not exist** in the later sense; resources were used communally.

3.2 Family Forms in the Pre-Matriarchal Era

3.2.1 Group Marriage or Communal Marriage

- Sexual and marital relations were **non-exclusive**.
- Groups of men and women within a social/tribal unit shared relations.
- The “biological father” was neither clearly identifiable nor socially important; the mother alone was the **certain parent**.

3.2.2 Absence of “Marriage” in the Modern Sense

- Bonds were based on **cohabitation, division of labor, and collective needs**, not contracts or property rights.
- Children belonged to the group, and childcare was the **responsibility of all members**.

3.2.3 Natural Kinship System

- Kinship was defined by obvious biological ties (the mother) or group membership.
- The concept of “father” had not yet acquired decisive importance in lineage or inheritance.

3.2.4 Sexual and Social Characteristics of This Period

1. **Relative sexual freedom:** relations were open and not bound by ownership.
2. **Shared economic cooperation:** both men and women contributed to food provision, with women often playing the larger role in gathering.
3. **Decentralized power:** leadership was temporary, based on skills (hunting, healing, guidance), not inheritance.
4. **No private property:** land, resources, and tools were held communally.

3.2.5 Transition to Matriarchy

With the gradual advancement of tools and the beginning of agriculture:

- **Permanent settlements** were established.
- Food production and surplus storage, in which women played a central role (particularly in agriculture and grain storage), increased their power.
- Matrilineality became the dominant kinship system since lineage through the mother was certain.

3.3 Comparative Framework of Family Transformation

Aspect	Group Marriage	Matriarchy	Patriarchy
Lineage	Maternal (natural/group)	Matrilineal	Patrilineal
Property	Fully communal	Communal, women-centered	Private, male-centered
Sexual Relations	Free and communal	Relatively free, flexible unions	Exclusive, controlled
Status of Women	Equal or slightly higher	Dominant in economy/culture	Subordinate, under male authority
Rituals	Nature-centered, no priestly hierarchy	Worship of Mother Goddess	Worship of male gods

3.3.1 Sexual Relations in Matriarchy Before Transition

- **Relative freedom** in partner choice, with fewer property-based restrictions; sex was based largely on mutual desire.
- **Matrilineal descent and communal property** meant children belonged to the mother's family; thus, strict control over women's sexuality was unnecessary.
- **Ritual and communal role of sex:** sexual relations were part of fertility rites, agricultural festivals, and collective solidarity.
- **Fertility rituals:** festivals and dances where sex symbolized sanctification of the earth and fertility.

3.2.3 Economic Features of Matriarchy

- Prominent role of women in agriculture and food distribution.

- Subsistence economy with in-group production and consumption.
- **Gender equality in production:** women played key roles in agriculture, gathering, and resource management.
- Communal ownership of land and resources within matrilineal groups. The **maternal uncle** often functioned as the social father.

3.4 Factors Behind the Transition to Patriarchy

3.4.1 Emergence of Surplus and Private Property

- With advances in agriculture and animal husbandry, **surplus production** developed.
- Men, gaining greater roles in surplus production and livestock control, sought to pass property to their own offspring.
- This required **sexual control of women** as an economic and social necessity.

3.4.2 Systems of War and Enslavement

- Intertribal wars, capture, and slavery increased men's control over labor, including women.
- Women were reduced to **personal property**, forming the basis of private ownership over their bodies.

3.4.3 Role of Religion and Ideology

- With the decline of the Mother Goddess and the rise of **male deities**, new religious and cultural ideologies sanctified female obedience and sexual fidelity.
- Free relations were banned, and moral-legal codes emerged to guarantee the “**purity of lineage.**”

3.5 Fundamental Changes in Sexual Relations

Aspect	Matriarchy	Patriarchy (Post-Transition)
Ownership of Body	The woman's body was part of her own and collective autonomy	The woman's body became property of father/husband
Lineage & Inheritance	Matrilineal; father of little importance	Patrilineal; strict control over fidelity
Sex & Marriage	Flexible, often without lifelong exclusivity	Exclusive, confined to formal marriage
Woman's Role	Productive and equal to men	Restricted to home and reproduction
Rituals & Culture	Sex as part of fertility and communal rites	Sex privatized, subordinated to family order

3.6 Socio-Cultural Consequences of the Transition

1. The “**historical defeat of the female sex**” (Engels): structural subordination of women.
2. Consolidation of **private property** and intergenerational inheritance.
3. Fundamental changes in morality and law: control of women’s bodies and sexuality.
4. Rise of sexual control and restrictive morality: women had to remain faithful to guarantee lineage.
5. Decline of sexual freedom: polyandry and free relations were criminalized or condemned.
6. Redistribution of economic power: women were excluded from economic decision-making as men gained control of private land.
7. Transformation of symbols and mythology: the Mother Goddess replaced by male warrior and lawgiver gods.
8. Restriction of sex’s ritual role: reduced from communal-sacred activity to private-legal relation.

3.7 Marx–Engels Analysis

Marx and Engels described this transition as the “**historical defeat of the female sex.**” According to them:

- **Economic cause:** the rise of private property and the need to secure legitimate heirs.
- **Social cause:** the patriarchal family organized as the smallest unit of social and economic control.
- **Historical result:** women were relegated to a subordinate status and stripped of control over production and reproduction.

3.8 Contemporary Reflections

Much of today’s sexual-social laws and customs trace back to this historical shift:

- Inheritance and lineage laws.
- Taboos around fidelity and virginity.
- Traditional roles of women in the family.

3.9 Timeline of the Transition in Different Regions

Approx. Period	Region/Civilization	Pre-Transition Structure	Signs of Emerging Patriarchy	Archaeological & Textual Evidence
6,000–10,000 BCE	Fertile Crescent (Mesopotamia, Anatolia)	Matrilineal farming societies; Mother Goddess worship	Private land ownership, grain surplus storage, military institutions	Mother Goddess figurines (Çatalhöyük); absence of palaces in early layers
3,000–5,000 BCE	Indus Valley, Ancient Egypt	Fertility goddesses; matrilineal kinship	Concentration of power in kings, permanent armies	Royal inscriptions; royal tombs with weapons, male power symbols
1,500–3,000 BCE	Mesopotamia & Eastern Mediterranean	Mother-centered rituals	Legal codes on female fidelity; male ownership of wives	Code of Hammurabi; Ugaritic texts; diminished role of Ishtar
~1500 CE	Ancient Greece & Rome	Myths of earth/mother goddesses	Rise of male warrior gods; exclusion of women from inheritance	Myths of Zeus, Apollo; Roman guardianship laws over women

3.10 Archaeological and Ethnographic Evidence

3.10.1 Archaeological Evidence

- Mother Goddess figurines (Çatalhöyük, Malta, Cyprus) with exaggerated fertility features (large belly and breasts).
- Absence of military structures and royal palaces in early settlements.
- Communal burials indicating relative social equality.

3.10.2 Contemporary Ethnographic Evidence

- **Mosuo (China):** matrilineal system, “walking marriages” without cohabitation; communal land.
- **Minangkabau (Indonesia):** matrilineal inheritance of land; women play central roles in decision-making.
- These groups represent surviving examples of structures more common before the patriarchal transition.

3.11 Conclusion of Part Three

The shift from matriarchy to patriarchy resulted from a **complex interplay of economic, military, and ideological factors**. This transformation restricted women's relative sexual freedom and economic–social position, and laid the foundations for gender and class control that persisted for millennia.

Part Four – The Sex Market and the Alienation of Women

This section primarily examines sexual relations from a natural perspective and their transformation into commodified products, as well as the alienation of women. It explores how the body, soul, and organs become instrumentalized in societies structured on formal and informal exploitation under **capitalism, neoliberalism, and post-capitalism**.

4.1 Introduction

The story of the creation of the first humans—Adam and Eve—and the birth of their first children is interpreted differently across religious and scientific texts. This story appears in the **Qur'an, the Torah, and the Bible**, alongside various interpretations concerning early human relations and methods of reproduction.

According to religious traditions, once God created Adam and Eve, they lived on earth and humanity descended from their children. While the Qur'an and other scriptures do not specify the exact number of their children or the method of reproduction, various narratives suggest that Adam and Eve had many offspring, including two sons—Cain and Abel—known from the story of Cain's murder of Abel.

In many religious interpretations, especially within Islamic and Jewish traditions, it is suggested that at the dawn of humanity, siblings from twin pairs of Adam and Eve were permitted to marry one another in order to ensure the continuation of the human race. For example, it is said that Cain desired to marry his sister from another twin pair, but when this was forbidden, he became enraged and murdered Abel. These early unions were regarded as divine allowances to preserve humanity, but later, as the population grew, such marriages became prohibited.

From a **scientific perspective**, however, based on evolutionary theory and genetic evidence, the birth of humans was the result of **gradual evolution** and sexual reproduction within species. Early hominins, such as *Homo habilis* and *Homo erectus*, reproduced sexually, and over millions of years this evolutionary process gave rise to *Homo sapiens*, modern humans. Unlike religious narratives, the evolutionary account makes no reference to sibling marriage but emphasizes the natural social and reproductive behaviors of early humans living in groups.

4.2 Sex in Prehistoric and Hunter-Gatherer Societies

Studying sexual relations in prehistory requires insights from **archaeology, anthropology, evolutionary biology, and mythology**. Covering millions of years before the emergence of organized civilizations and writing, our understanding comes primarily from material evidence (cave paintings, figurines, tools) and comparisons with contemporary indigenous societies.

In this period, sex was not confined to reproduction or pleasure alone; it was also part of social organization, ritual practice, and survival.

4.3 Social Structure and Sexual Freedom

Research by anthropologists such as **Margaret Mead** and **Claude Lévi-Strauss** shows that hunter-gatherer societies tended to be **egalitarian and horizontally structured**:

- Private property, as we know it today, did not exist.
- Women and men contributed relatively equally to subsistence (women through gathering, men through hunting).
- Individuals largely controlled their own bodies and sexual relations, with minimal formal restrictions.
- Both polygyny and polyandry were observed in some groups, often serving to strengthen tribal alliances and distribute responsibility for children.

4.4 The Role of Sex in Rituals and Beliefs

Many prehistoric artifacts suggest that sex was regarded as **sacred**:

- The **Venus figurines** (e.g., Venus of Willendorf, ~25,000 years ago), with emphasized reproductive features, symbolized fertility and abundance.
- Fertility rites involved dance, song, and sometimes ritualized intercourse to ensure crop success or hunting fortune.
- Beliefs in the connection between the lunar cycle and female fertility gave the **moon and female deities** special symbolic significance.

4.5 Sexual Relations and Tribal Bonds

Sexual relations often served as a tool for forming alliances between tribes or groups:

- Marriage contracts with dowries or legal documents did not yet exist.
- Bonds were formed through ritual intercourse, partner exchange, or communal sharing of partners.
- Such practices created not only family ties but also networks of support in hunting, warfare, and child-rearing.

4.6 Absence of the Concept of Virginity

Anthropological evidence suggests that virginity had **no social value** in this era:

- Girls typically engaged in sexual relations freely upon reaching puberty.
- There were no rituals or laws enforcing “chastity” before marriage.

- A person's value was determined by survival skills—hunting, gathering, cooperation—not by sexual status.

4.7 Homosexuality and Sexual Diversity

Prehistoric societies also included same-sex behaviors as part of natural human diversity:

- Such relations were not identity-based but often framed around **pleasure, friendship, or initiation rituals**.
- There is no evidence of systematic repression of same-sex relations during this time.

4.8 Sex and Survival

Given high infant mortality rates in the absence of modern medicine, **frequent sexual activity and reproduction were vital** for survival:

- Women bore children more frequently.
- Offspring were seen as both emotional bonds and **economic assets**, contributing labor to daily survival.

4.9 Artistic and Visual Evidence

- Cave paintings from **Lascaux** and **Chauvet** (France, over 15,000 years old) depict hunting, dancing, and fertility symbols.
- Some images show animal and human mating side by side, suggesting an integrated view of nature and sexuality.

4.10 The Transition to Agriculture and Changing Attitudes

The end of the hunter-gatherer era and the beginning of agriculture (~10,000 years ago) marked a turning point:

- Land ownership and the need for heirs increased control over women's sexuality.
- The rise of **patriarchy** gradually restricted earlier sexual freedoms.
- Women's bodies became part of **"family capital."**

4.11 Conclusion of Part Four

Contrary to popular belief, prehistory was a time of **relative sexual freedom** with minimal restrictions on bodies and desires. Sex was woven into daily life, ritual, and survival. However, with the economic and social transformations brought by agriculture, these patterns were fundamentally altered, laying the foundations of sexual control and gender inequality.

Part Five – The Beginning of Agriculture and the Neolithic Revolution: A Turning Point in Sexual Relations and Bodily Ownership

5.1 Introduction

Around 10,000–12,000 years ago, humanity underwent one of the most profound transformations in its history: the shift from the **hunter–gatherer lifestyle** to agriculture and animal domestication. This transition, known as the **Neolithic Revolution**, did not simply change how food was produced. It fundamentally altered the structures of society, the meaning of property, and the nature of sexual relations.

Hunter–gatherer societies lived in small, fluid groups, obtaining food by hunting animals and gathering wild plants, fruits, nuts, roots, and honey. These groups were relatively egalitarian, sharing resources and practicing social cooperation. While gendered divisions of labor existed, they were less rigid, and women often played significant roles in food provision.

Agriculture, however, required **permanent settlement** and the management of land. With this came the idea of private ownership — first of fields, then of animals, households, and, eventually, people. The consequences reached far beyond economics: they reshaped the most intimate aspects of human life, particularly sexuality and bodily autonomy.

5.2 The Emergence of Private Property and Its Effect on Sexual Relations

With farming, land became the most valuable resource. Unlike hunted animals or gathered fruits, crops could be **stored, inherited, and monopolized**. This created a new obsession with **lineage**: men needed certainty that their heirs were truly their biological offspring, so that property could be passed on securely.

This concern produced restrictions on women’s sexual freedom. What had once been more fluid and communal forms of partnership became strictly regulated. **Marriage shifted from a social bond to an economic contract**, ensuring the stability of inheritance.

Anthropologist Jack Goody argued that agrarian societies tied property and kinship so closely together that sexuality itself was commodified. The body, particularly the female body, was no longer simply a natural entity but became part of a **system of property management**.

5.3 The Rise of Patriarchy

The production of agricultural surplus created new hierarchies. Men’s role in plowing, herding, and irrigation gave them greater control over food production. Women, by contrast, were increasingly confined to domestic roles, their economic contributions overshadowed by male labor in the fields.

This imbalance led to the institutionalization of patriarchy. As Friedrich Engels observed in *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State*, the rise of private property marked the **“historic defeat of the female sex.”** Women’s earlier roles as co-providers were diminished, and male dominance became embedded in law, religion, and custom.

Legal codes in Mesopotamia, Assyria, and later societies reflected this shift, prescribing harsh punishments for women’s sexual transgressions while granting men significant latitude. Patriarchy was thus not accidental but an organized social order rooted in property relations.

5.4 Virginity as Family Capital

One of the most visible symbols of this new patriarchal order was the rise of virginity as a **form of family capital**. Since inheritance depended on uncontested lineage, brides were expected to be sexually untouched before marriage. Virgin daughters became assets in negotiations between families, used to secure property and political alliances.

Customs and rituals emerged to verify female chastity. From the display of bloodied wedding sheets in Middle Eastern and European agrarian communities to harsh penalties against non-virgin brides, societies codified virginity as both **an economic safeguard and a moral expectation**.

As feminist historian Gerda Lerner has argued, this was not a natural development but a social construct: virginity was manufactured as a mechanism to reinforce male ownership over women’s bodies.

5.5 Polygyny and Economic Power

The accumulation of surplus allowed wealthy men to expand their households through **polygyny**. Multiple wives were not only reproductive assets but also **symbols of wealth and political power**. In many African, Middle Eastern, and Asian societies, the number of wives a man possessed signified his economic strength.

By contrast, **polyandry** — a woman with multiple husbands — appeared only in rare ecological contexts, such as in parts of Tibet, where limited land made multiple male partners practical. The asymmetry between polygyny and polyandry underscores how deeply gendered inequality was woven into property relations.

Marriage thus became stratified: monogamy for the poor, polygyny for the rich, reinforcing economic divisions and transforming women into instruments of male power.

5.6 Sex and Fertility Rites in Agricultural Cultures

Although women’s autonomy was curtailed, sexuality retained symbolic and ritual significance in agrarian societies. Fertility of the soil was equated with fertility of the body, and sexuality was celebrated in **seasonal festivals and rituals**.

In ancient Mesopotamia, sacred marriage rites between the king and a temple priestess were enacted to ensure agricultural abundance. In Europe, harvest festivals included fertility dances, songs, and symbolic sexual acts. Such practices reveal that women's sexuality, while tightly controlled in daily life, remained **central to cultural imaginations of prosperity and cosmic order**.

This paradox illustrates how sexuality was simultaneously repressed and ritualized, constrained in practice but exalted in symbolism.

5.7 Punishment for Extramarital Relations

The concern with lineage made female fidelity essential. Women accused of adultery faced extreme punishments, from public humiliation to execution. The **Code of Hammurabi** explicitly prescribed severe penalties for unfaithful wives, reflecting the intertwining of sexuality and property rights.

Men, by contrast, enjoyed relative freedom. Male extramarital relations were often tolerated, especially among elites who maintained concubines or visited prostitutes. This double standard created a long-lasting **gendered asymmetry** that persists in many cultures to this day.

Thus, extramarital sexuality was not judged equally; women bore the weight of collective honor, while men exercised privilege.

5.8 Changing Role of Sex in Tribal Structures

As societies expanded into larger tribes and proto-states, sexual relations became further politicized. Marriage was used to secure alliances, unify clans, and stabilize property holdings. Women were exchanged as **gifts or guarantees** between groups, turning sexuality into a mechanism of diplomacy.

Claude Lévi-Strauss, in his structuralist theory of kinship, argued that women became the **"supreme gift"** exchanged between men to forge alliances. This shows how sexuality, once personal and communal, was transformed into an arena of **political economy**.

Sex, therefore, became less about desire or union and more about consolidating property and power at the tribal and intertribal level.

5.9 The Impact on Women and Their Status

The Neolithic Revolution redefined women primarily as **producers of heirs**. Their capacity for reproduction was central to the survival of property-based societies. Women were no longer co-providers but were increasingly valued for their ability to perpetuate male lineages.

As Gerda Lerner emphasized in *The Creation of Patriarchy*, women became the first systematically subordinated class in human history. Their autonomy was curtailed, their marriages arranged, and their bodies treated as assets in economic and political exchanges. This subordination laid the foundation for later inequalities in class, gender, and labor.

5.10 Transition to Ancient Civilizations

The Neolithic Revolution laid the groundwork for the rise of the great ancient civilizations — Mesopotamia, Egypt, the Indus Valley, and beyond. Monumental architecture, writing, and law all emerged in these settings, but so too did **deepened systems of patriarchal control**.

Legal codes institutionalized male dominance, binding sexuality, inheritance, and property together. Women's bodies became integral to the state's project of wealth accumulation and dynastic continuity.

Thus, while agriculture enabled the flourishing of civilization, it also marked the **end of egalitarian relations** and the beginning of millennia-long structures of inequality. Sexuality was transformed from a realm of freedom into an instrument of property, power, and patriarchal authority.

Part Six – The Middle Ages: Religion, Repression, and Sexual Contradictions

6.1 Introduction

The period between roughly **500 and 1500 CE**, conventionally labeled the **Middle Ages**, was marked by the dominance of religion as a central force shaping human life. In Europe, the **Catholic Church** defined morality, law, and even science. In the Islamic world, the **Caliphates** and later regional dynasties established Islamic jurisprudence (*fiqh*) as the governing framework of society. In Jewish communities dispersed across Europe and the Middle East, **rabbinic authority** continued to regulate family and sexual life through religious law.

Despite this veneer of strict moral discipline, the Middle Ages were rife with **contradictions**. Sexual control was promoted as the foundation of religious and social order, but clandestine relationships, prostitution, concubinage, and even abuses by religious leaders themselves flourished beneath the surface. The gap between **ideal and practice** created a tension that not only defined medieval attitudes toward sexuality but also shaped the development of later Western and Islamic societies.

6.2 Christianity and Sexual Control in Europe

6.2.1 Church Teachings

The Catholic Church regarded sex as fundamentally **tainted by sin**, tolerable only within the bounds of marriage and primarily for **procreation**. The writings of **St. Augustine (354–430 CE)** were central to this doctrine. Augustine argued that sexual desire (*concupiscentia*) was the result of **original sin**, inherited from Adam and Eve’s fall in Eden. For him, even marital sex carried the stain of lust if pursued for pleasure rather than reproduction.

Over time, this theological perspective hardened into practice. **Priests and monks** were required to remain celibate, a rule formalized by the Gregorian reforms of the 11th century. Celibacy became a symbol of purity, although in practice, violations of this vow were widespread.

6.2.2 Prohibitions and Punishments

The Church condemned a wide range of sexual behaviors:

- **Adultery** was punished severely, often through public humiliation or exile.
- **Homosexuality** was classified as “sodomy” and, by the 13th century, was punishable by death in many jurisdictions.
- **Bestiality and witchcraft** were framed as grave sins against nature.

The **Inquisition** (12th–15th centuries) played a particularly repressive role. Women accused of witchcraft were often charged with engaging in sexual intercourse with demons or the Devil, leading to their execution by fire. These accusations reveal the deep link between **misogyny and sexual fear** in medieval Europe.

6.2.3 Prostitution as a “Necessary Evil”

Despite these strict prohibitions, prostitution flourished across medieval Europe. Many towns maintained official **brothels**, often taxed and regulated by local authorities. Theologians such as **St. Thomas Aquinas** described prostitution as a “necessary evil,” arguing that it served as a social safety valve, preventing men from pursuing married women.

This paradox illustrates the duality of medieval Christian sexual culture: **public condemnation combined with tacit toleration**.

6.3 Islam and Sexual Relations in the Middle Ages

6.3.1 Qur’anic and Jurisprudential Teachings

Islamic teachings on sexuality were framed by the **Qur’an** and elaborated by Islamic jurists (*fuqaha*). Sexual relations were permitted only within marriage, while **zina** (fornication or adultery) was considered a grave sin, punishable by flogging or, in some interpretations, stoning.

Unlike Christianity, Islam permitted **polygyny** (up to four wives), provided that husbands treated all wives equally. Furthermore, Islamic law sanctioned concubinage: men could have sexual relations with female slaves (*milk al-yamin*) without marriage.

6.3.2 Sexual and Medical Literature

One of the most striking features of medieval Islam was the **openness of sexual discourse** in literary and scientific texts. Works such as *The Perfumed Garden* by Muhammad al-Nafzawi (15th century) discussed sexual techniques, pleasure, and health in explicit terms. Physicians like **Avicenna (Ibn Sina)** incorporated sexual health into broader medical treatises, while Sufi poets used erotic symbolism to describe mystical union with God.

This intellectual climate contrasts with the **taboo of sexual discussion** in medieval Europe, showing how Islamic societies maintained a more pragmatic and sometimes celebratory approach to sexuality.

6.3.3 The Sexual Slave Market

The institution of slavery also shaped medieval Islamic sexuality. Captive women taken in war or purchased in markets were absorbed into harems as concubines. The Abbasid Caliph **Harun al-Rashid** (r. 786–809 CE) reportedly maintained thousands of concubines. Later, the Ottoman Empire institutionalized harems as centers of political as well as sexual power.

While Islamic law granted certain rights to concubines and their children, the practice illustrates the **fusion of sexuality, war, and property** in medieval Islamic empires.

6.4 Judaism in the Middle Ages

Jewish communities across Europe and the Islamic world preserved religious laws governing sexuality. **Marriage and procreation** were considered duties commanded by God. The Talmud outlined obligations for husbands and wives, including the frequency of marital intercourse, which varied depending on a husband's occupation (e.g., scholars less frequently than laborers).

Extramarital sex was strictly forbidden, and while Jewish law condemned prostitution, some communities tolerated its existence in practice. Unlike Christianity, Judaism did not valorize celibacy; sexuality within marriage was regarded as a **sacred duty** rather than a shameful necessity.

6.5 The Duality and Corruption of Religious Elites

A major contradiction of the Middle Ages lay in the **moral failings of religious leaders** themselves. In Europe, popes and bishops were frequently accused of maintaining mistresses or fathering illegitimate children. The notorious **Pope Alexander VI (r. 1492–1503)** openly acknowledged his children and engaged in political marriages for them.

Similarly, in the Islamic world, certain caliphs and sultans were infamous for indulgence in wine, sexual excess, and the exploitation of slaves, even while upholding laws that condemned ordinary believers for similar acts. This **duality of prohibition and indulgence** eroded the moral authority of religious institutions and deepened public cynicism.

6.6 The Crusades and Cultural–Sexual Exchange

The **Crusades (1096–1291)** brought Europeans into direct contact with Islamic societies. Crusaders encountered new customs, from bathhouses to erotic poetry, that contrasted sharply with Europe's prudish ideals. Tales of the Orient, often exaggerated, circulated in Europe, fueling both fascination and fear.

Erotic stories and medical knowledge were translated into Latin, shaping later European literature. Yet the Church reacted defensively, condemning what it saw as “Eastern corruption” and intensifying restrictions on sexuality at home.

6.7 Women and the Body in the Middle Ages

In Europe, the female body was portrayed as a **source of temptation and sin**. Church fathers frequently warned men of women's seductive power, and Eve's role in the Fall was invoked as justification for women's subordination.

In the Islamic world, women were veiled and segregated in many contexts, yet they played visible roles in **poetry, music, and courtly culture**. Female poets such as **Wallada bint al-Mustakfi** in Al-Andalus (11th century) composed bold erotic verses, challenging male dominance through literary expression.

These differences reveal the **plurality of women's experiences** in the Middle Ages: oppressed in many ways, but never entirely silenced.

6.8 Rape as a Weapon of War

Across both Christian and Muslim societies, war turned women's bodies into battlefields. Chronicles describe mass rapes following the sack of cities, framed both as **spoils of war** and as acts of humiliation against the enemy.

During the Crusades, European and Muslim sources alike recount atrocities committed against women in captured towns. Such acts reveal how sexual violence was normalized within medieval warfare, justified through religious or military logic.

6.9 Conclusion of Part Six

The Middle Ages encapsulate the paradox of sexual life under religious dominance. Ideals of chastity, purity, and control were proclaimed, yet prostitution, concubinage, and sexual corruption persisted at every level of society. Religious leaders themselves often violated the standards they imposed on others, while wars and conquests normalized sexual violence.

The contradictions of the era highlight a universal truth: attempts to suppress sexuality entirely tend to produce **secrecy, hypocrisy, and exploitation**, rather than true moral order. The legacy of these medieval struggles over sexuality continued to shape Western, Islamic, and Jewish traditions long after the close of the Middle Ages.

Part Seven – Renaissance and Early Modernity: The Return of Pleasure and Changing Attitudes Toward the Body

7.1 Introduction

The Renaissance (14th–17th centuries) marked a turning point in cultural history and perceptions of the human body. After centuries of medieval sexual morality, Europe moved toward reviving the worldly values of ancient Greece and Rome, redefining humanity’s relationship with pleasure, love, and sexuality. With the rise of **humanism** and the advancement of art and science, the body was elevated from being a “source of sin” to a **symbol of beauty and inspiration**.

7.2 Humanism and Intellectual Freedom

7.2.1 Return to the Classics

- Humanist thinkers revived Greek and Roman texts in which the body and sexuality were regarded as natural parts of life.
- Translations of classical works broadened European understanding of more open views on love and pleasure.

7.2.2 Art and Nudity

- Artists such as **Leonardo da Vinci, Michelangelo, and Botticelli** depicted the nude body with grandeur and reverence.
- Although the Church sometimes reacted negatively, the growing power of secular patrons ensured the survival of these works.

7.3 Marriage, Love, and Sexual Relations

7.3.1 Marriage as a Socio-Economic Bond

- Marriage remained primarily a tool for political and economic alliances, but the idea of “romantic love” began to take root.
- Romantic literature, such as Shakespeare’s plays, intertwined love with emotion and sexual attraction.

7.3.2 Prostitution and Courtesans

- Official brothels operated in cities like Venice and Florence.
- **Courtesans** were educated, beautiful women who, beyond sexual relations, participated in artistic and political circles. Stories of such women appear in famous novels like *Madame Bovary*, *Anna Karenina*, and *Don Juan*.

7.4 Discovery of the New World and Cultural–Sexual Exchange

- Exploratory voyages to the Americas, Africa, and Asia exposed Europeans to diverse sexual customs.
- Venereal diseases, especially **sypilis**, entered Europe and infused new fears into the idea of sexual freedom.

7.5 The Reformation and Sexual Morality

- **Martin Luther** and other Protestant reformers permitted clerical marriage and emphasized the role of the family.
- Protestants maintained a stricter stance toward prostitution and “excessive hedonism,” yet the Church’s control over private life diminished.

7.6 Medicine and the Human Body

- Advances in anatomy and medicine expanded scientific understanding of reproduction and sexuality.
- Medical books included detailed illustrations of sexual organs that had previously been considered forbidden.

7.7 Homosexuality and Sexual Diversity

- Male homosexuality, known since antiquity and even referenced in the Qur’an through the story of the “People of Lot,” was never formally accepted.
- In some courts and artistic circles, however, homosexual relationships existed discreetly or semi-openly.
- Laws generally remained harsh, with punishments enforced in many regions.

7.8 Women and Changing Social Roles

- Women writers and artists such as **Christine de Pizan** advocated for women’s rights and equal love.
- Despite intellectual progress, many women remained confined to domestic roles.
- Even today, despite feminist struggles, women’s wages remain unequal to men’s for the same work in most countries—even those considered “female-led.”

7.9 Unpaid Work

Unpaid work includes all activities for which no wage is received but which are still performed. While this may include voluntary tasks, the concept in economics and sociology primarily refers to **domestic labor**—housework, caregiving for children and the elderly, cooking, or family care, typically performed by women without pay.

7.9.1 Ratio of Unpaid Work Between Women and Men in Different Regions

Region	Women (%)	Men (%)	Notes
USA	60–70%	30–40%	Women carry the bulk of housework and caregiving, though men’s participation is increasing.
Europe	65–75%	25–35%	Scandinavian policies have reduced gender gaps in unpaid work.
Asia	75–85%	15–25%	Women dominate household, caregiving, and agricultural tasks.
Africa	80–90%	10–20%	Women bear most domestic and agricultural labor.
India	80–90%	10–20%	Women largely engaged in agricultural and household work without pay.
China	70–80%	20–30%	Women still shoulder much household and caregiving work.
Middle East	75–85%	15–25%	Gender roles remain highly traditional, women dominate domestic work.
Iran	70–80%	20–30%	Women do most domestic and caregiving work, also participate in agriculture.

Key Points:

- Agricultural labor in many developing countries (e.g., India, Africa) is heavily performed by women.
- In developed countries, men increasingly contribute to household and caregiving, though women still dominate.
- Cultural and social norms strongly shape gender roles: in the Middle East, traditional divisions remain deeply entrenched.

7.9.2 Findings from the International Labour Organization (ILO), 2023

- In 2023, **748 million people over age 15** were excluded from the labor force due to caregiving responsibilities: **708 million women** versus **40 million men**.
- Globally, **45% of inactive women** cite caregiving as the reason, compared with 63% in North Africa and 59% in Arab states.
- Two-thirds of women of prime working age (25–54) outside the labor force are inactive due to childcare, eldercare, or family duties.

- This unequal distribution of unpaid care work severely hinders women’s labor force participation and widens gender inequality.

7.9.3 Factors Intensifying Women’s Unequal Workload

- **Cultural and social norms** designating women as “primary caregivers” and men as “breadwinners.”
- **Lower education, rural residence, and lack of access** to public services (e.g., preschool, long-term care).
- **Demographic shifts, climate change, and crises** (e.g., COVID-19) forced many women to leave the workforce or reduce working hours.

7.9.4 Annual Economic Value of Unpaid Work (Estimated, in USD)

Region	Women	Men	Notes
USA	10,000–4,000	4,000–1,000	The economic value of women’s domestic and caregiving work is very high; average household wage equivalents \$15–20/hour.
Europe	15,000–5,000	4,000–1,500	Scandinavian social policies increase the valuation of household labor.
Asia	8,000–3,000	2,000–500	Household and agricultural labor of women varies by country.
Africa	5,000–2,000	1,500–300	Women’s domestic and agricultural labor forms a large share of economic activity.
India	6,000–2,000	2,000–500	Women heavily engaged in agriculture and caregiving, mostly unrecognized.
China	8,000–3,000	2,500–700	Value of women’s household and caregiving labor is rising.
Middle East	10,000–3,500	2,000–500	Domestic and caregiving roles remain central in women’s lives.
Iran	6,000–2,500	2,000–600	Women contribute significantly in household, caregiving, and agriculture.

Part Eight – The Enlightenment and the Revolutions of the 18th and 19th Centuries: Science, Freedom, and New Forms of Control

8.1 Introduction

The Enlightenment (18th century) and the social–political revolutions of the 19th century marked a turning point in attitudes toward individual freedoms, including sexual freedom. Thinkers of this era emphasized **rationality, empiricism, and individual rights**, and the challenge to the traditional authority of the Church and monarchy extended into the domain of sexual relations. Yet this relative freedom was accompanied by **new instruments of control and social discipline**, which produced modern forms of restriction.

8.2 Philosophy and Sexuality in the Enlightenment

8.2.1 Rationality and Natural Rights

- Thinkers such as **John Locke, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, and Voltaire** emphasized individual freedom and natural human rights.
- Debates arose about freedom in love and marital choice, although Rousseau in *Émile* still defined women’s roles within the family.

8.2.2 Secularism and Marriage

- Marriage gradually shifted from being solely a religious institution to a **civil contract**.
- Divorce became legal in some countries, though still heavily restricted.

8.3 Revolutions and Social Change

8.3.1 The French Revolution (1789)

- Secular legislation abolished many religious laws, especially concerning marriage and divorce.
- Licensed brothels in Paris and other cities were legalized and placed under state supervision.

8.3.2 The Industrial Revolution (19th century)

- Massive migration to cities transformed the traditional family structure.
- More women entered the workforce, but urban poverty simultaneously fueled a rise in prostitution.

8.4 Medicine and Sexual Control

8.4.1 Sexology

- Physicians such as **Richard von Krafft-Ebing** and **Havelock Ellis** began classifying sexual behaviors.
- Homosexuality, masturbation, fetishism, and other orientations were recorded in scientific terms—though often labeled as “perversions.”

8.4.2 Public Health and Venereal Disease

- Governments imposed strict regulations for medical inspections of women in prostitution.
- Public awareness of **syphilis and gonorrhea** increased, though the burden of disease control fell disproportionately on women.

8.5 Women and Early Struggles for Equality

8.5.1 Right to Education and Participation

- Pioneers such as **Mary Wollstonecraft**, in her *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*, called for equality in education and civil rights.
- Despite these claims, attitudes toward women’s sexual freedom remained deeply limited and ambivalent.

8.5.2 Control of Reproduction

- Simple contraceptives, such as condoms and diaphragms, became more accessible.
- The debate over women’s **right to control their own bodies** began, though strong religious opposition persisted.

8.6 Prostitution and Sex Work in the 18th and 19th Centuries

8.6.1 Europe

- London, Paris, and Amsterdam became major centers of prostitution, with legal or semi-legal brothels.
- “Street women” in poorer districts were frequent victims of police violence and client abuse.

8.6.2 Colonies

- In Asian and African colonies, prostitution often served the needs of soldiers and traders.

- Intercontinental sex trade emerged, with wide-ranging consequences for indigenous societies.

8.6.3 Homosexuality and Criminalization

- In most European countries, homosexual relations remained illegal, punishable by imprisonment or forced labor.
- The trial of **Oscar Wilde**, the famous Irish-born writer, in the late 19th century exemplifies the harsh social–legal repression of sexual diversity.

8.7 Early Pornography

- The advent of printing increased the production and circulation of erotic books and images.
- Governments sometimes censored them, but underground markets flourished.

8.8 The Destructive Role of the Pornography Industry

French philosopher and cultural theorist **Jean Baudrillard (1929–2007)**, a key postmodern thinker, argued that pornography is harmful for two main reasons:

1. It manipulates sexual relations to obscure class struggle.
2. It corrupts sexuality by **turning it into a commodity**.

Today, digital platforms and visual media are saturated with pornographic content. Advertising aggressively markets sexual aids—pills, gels, and devices—while porn networks expand globally, and some porn stars have become international celebrities.

Yet, as Baudrillard noted, as much as attention is given to “sex,” **lovemaking** itself becomes forgotten, replaced by the commodification of the “sculpted body.” In social media cultures—“Instagram models,” the Kardashian aesthetic, “diva” figures—the eroticized body is marketed as the ideal.

Slovenian philosopher and cultural critic **Slavoj Žižek** adds:

“Love is what transforms sex into something beyond masturbation. Without love, even when you are with your partner, you are merely masturbating with them.”

Žižek stresses that consumer culture and mass media reproduce ideology by promoting commodified sex. In this system, sexual relations are reduced to friction between artificially enhanced bodies, emptied of human intimacy.

Pornographic films, meanwhile, present performers pretending to enjoy pleasure before the camera, while in reality enduring alienation, exhaustion, and higher rates of depression and suicide than the general population.

In this commodified sexual economy, what is sacrificed is **the capacity for true intimacy and love**. Pornography, as an industry, becomes a factory that produces polished bodies—heavily modified, operated upon, and devoid of spirit—resembling mechanical simulacra rather than human beings.

8.9 Conclusion of Part Eight

The Enlightenment and the 19th century presented a paradox: on the one hand, new freedoms in love, marriage, and scientific knowledge of sexuality; on the other, **modern forms of control** through law, medicine, and social discipline. This era laid the cultural and intellectual foundations for the **sexual revolution of the 20th century**.

Part Nine – The 20th Century to Today: Sexual Revolution, Technology, and the Global Sex Market

9.1 Introduction

The 20th century witnessed **unprecedented transformations in attitudes toward sexuality**. Advances in medical science, two world wars, cultural revolutions, and the rise of mass media shifted sexual relations from being a “taboo” and “private matter” to becoming a major arena of **public culture, economics, and politics**. The 21st century, with new technologies and globalization, has further expanded sexual experience and the sex market into a **borderless, highly commercialized phenomenon**.

9.2 The Sexual Revolution (1960s and 1970s)

9.2.1 Historical Context

- After World War II, economic growth, urban migration, and rising education created fertile ground for cultural change.
- The **oral contraceptive pill (1960)** enabled the separation of sex from reproduction.

9.2.2 Invention of Contraceptive Tools

The mass production of condoms and oral contraceptives radically altered women’s sexual freedom and reshaped family and relationship norms. These innovations were intertwined with broader **social, cultural, economic, and political transformations** of the late 20th and early 21st centuries.

They empowered women to take greater control of their sexual health and avoid unwanted pregnancies, granting new autonomy in sexual decision-making. Previously, many women’s sexual lives were constrained by their husbands’ decisions and social pressure. With contraception, women increasingly controlled their own sexual lives, breaking free from traditional restrictions.

9.2.3 Impact on Sexual Identity and Women’s Role

- Women who could independently prevent pregnancy gained greater agency in both sexual and emotional relationships.
- They managed careers and education more effectively, choosing when or whether to have children.
- These shifts contributed to women’s growing participation in the labor force, politics, and public life.

The **1960s–1970s sexual revolution** ushered in:

- Reduction of sexual taboos.
- Greater acceptance of premarital and non-marital sex.
- Changing social attitudes toward free relationships.
- Feminist demands for equal rights in sexuality and reproductive autonomy.

9.2.4 Liberation Movements

- Hippie, feminist, and LGBTQ movements advanced the slogan of “free love.”
- Cohabitation and premarital relationships became normalized.

9.3 Conservative Backlash

- Churches and conservative groups resisted these changes, sparking heated cultural–political debates about “public morality.”
- Neo-patriarchal ideologies framed women primarily as reproducers and homemakers.
- Philosopher **Luce Irigaray** argued that in patriarchal societies, women are reduced to commodities:
 - The mother as *use value*,
 - The virgin as *exchange value*,
 - The prostitute as a hybrid of both.

From a **Marxist-feminist perspective**, unpaid domestic labor by women underpins capitalism by stabilizing the system without financial recognition, rendering women as “invisible labor commodities.”

9.4 Ideological Motherhood and Pronatalism

- Conservative discourses, echoed by figures like J.D. Vance (U.S. Vice President under Trump), disparage childless women as “childless cat ladies.”
- **Pronatalist policies** (bonuses, incentives, restricted welfare) instrumentalize women as tools of demographic engineering, reducing them to reproducers of citizens, workers, and voters.

9.5 Index of Women’s Devaluation in Conservative Contexts

Dimension	Indicator
Theoretic	Women defined as commodities or reproductive tools.
Socio-economic	Women’s unpaid domestic labor ignored.
Ideological	Woman valued primarily as mother/housewife; independence denied.

9.6 Medicine, Psychology, and Sexuality

9.6.1 Modern Psychology

- **Sigmund Freud** emphasized the centrality of sexual desire in the human psyche.
- **Alfred Kinsey's** reports (1940s–1950s) on American sexual behavior shocked society and opened debate.

9.6.2 STDs and HIV/AIDS

- The **AIDS epidemic of the 1980s** reshaped sexual norms, highlighting the need for “safe sex.”
- Condom campaigns became global public health initiatives.

9.7 Feminism: Waves Two and Three

9.7.1 Ownership of the Body

- Feminists fought for women's right to decide over their own bodies, including access to legal abortion.
- This claim underpinned arguments for the decriminalization of sex work.

9.7.2 Critique of Commodification

- Some feminists equated pornography and advertising with a **new form of sexual slavery**.
- Others noted how women themselves, through digital platforms, became active agents of commodifying their own bodies.

9.8 Media and Pornography

9.8.1 From Magazines to Internet

- **Playboy (1953)** mainstreamed sexuality.
- The 1970s “Golden Age of Porn” brought explicit films to cinemas.

9.8.2 Internet Explosion

- Since the 1990s, the internet globalized pornography.
- Platforms like **OnlyFans** created a direct “producer-to-consumer” economy.
- Many young women, including students and migrants, turned to online sex work for quick financial gain, though often at high personal and social costs.

9.9 The Global Sex Market

9.9.1 Market Diversity

The global sex industry includes **prostitution, pornography, sexual massage, sex dolls, sex tourism, and surrogacy**. Its annual value exceeds **\$180 billion**.

9.9.2 Regional Examples

- **Netherlands:** Amsterdam's Red Light District under legal regulation.
- **Germany:** Legalized prostitution since 2002, with thousands of registered sex workers.
- **UAE & Oman:** Hidden luxury sex tourism.
- **Turkey & Kurdistan (Iraq):** Semi-legal and clandestine markets.
- **Africa:** War and poverty drive sexual exploitation.
- **Canada:** Massage parlors openly advertising with explicit images.
- **UK:** Escort websites operating internationally as networks of sex services.

9.10 New Technologies and the Future of Sex

9.10.1 Robots and Artificial Intelligence

- AI-driven sex robots simulate physical and emotional responses.
- Films like *Her*, *Ex Machina*, and *Subservience* explore the ethical dilemmas.

9.10.2 Virtual Reality (VR)

- Immersive sexual experiences in VR blur the boundaries of intimacy and reality.

9.11 Critiques of Sexual Capitalism

9.11.1 Commodification of Body and Emotion

- Global capitalism, under the slogan "My body, my choice," markets women's bodies like consumer goods.

9.11.2 Feminist Contradictions

- While early feminism denounced objectification, parts of modern feminism normalize women's self-objectification as income generation.

9.11.3 Digital Sex Workers

- **Camgirls** and online performers (OnlyFans, Chaturbate, BongaCams, etc.) form a growing sector.
- Estimated 80–90% of online sex workers are women.
- Features: flexible hours, global audiences, variable income, yet risks of exploitation, mental strain, and privacy violations.

9.12 Feminist Perspectives on Sex Markets

1. **Abolitionist Feminism (Jeffreys, Barry):** sex trade as violence/sexual slavery → demand for prohibition.
2. **Moderate Feminism (Shrage, Nussbaum):** if fully consensual, sex work can be legitimate commerce alongside strong anti-trafficking protections.

9.13 Four Legal Models for Regulating Sex Markets

1. **Prohibition:** total criminalization of all actors.
2. **Abolition:** only buyers criminalized (Nordic model).
3. **Regulation/Legalization:** state licensing, taxation, health checks (e.g., Germany, Netherlands).
4. **Decriminalization:** removal of specific laws, treating consensual sex work as labor (e.g., New Zealand).

9.14 Conclusion of Part Nine

The 20th and 21st centuries have **shifted the boundaries of sexuality scientifically, culturally, and economically**. Sex has moved from private practice to a defining element of **public culture, global economics, and politics**.

Yet, the central contradiction remains: **the tension between personal freedom and the commodification of the body**. The most vulnerable groups in the global sex market are typically poor women, migrants, and those coerced by trafficking.

While feminist movements diverge between abolition and harm-reduction approaches, one fact is clear: the global sex industry is expanding rapidly in the digital era, often at the cost of women's dignity, health, and equality.

Part Ten – The Communalization of Women or Cleansing Society from the Commodification of Everything

10.1 Introduction

In Engels' seminal work *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State* (1884), he argued that the establishment of monogamous marriage was the result of the rise of private property and men's desire to transfer their wealth to legitimate heirs. This form of family structure reduced women—from a relatively equal position in matrilineal societies—to sexual slaves whose role was to guarantee lineage legitimacy. Engels called this familial revolution the **“world-historic defeat of the female sex.”** He further noted that the modern family is a microcosm of society's power relations, where men are lawfully dominant over women, reducing them to instruments of reproduction.

In *The Communist Manifesto*, Marx and Engels used a phrase that critics often distorted: it was not a call for the “communalization of women,” but rather a call to end the condition in which women were treated as commodities or instruments of sexual production. Engels clarified in his *Principles of Communism* that concerns about “sharing women” were a misunderstanding—communism sought to **eradicate prostitution and sexual exploitation** in order to liberate women, not to reconstruct sexual relations on the basis of money and crude exchange.

Engels believed that with the rise of private property, women were reduced from positions of equality in matrilineal societies to **“slaves of reproduction.”** For Marx and Engels, “the communalization of women” did not mean free love as a political goal, but rather liberation from sexual exploitation. Marx also described the modern family as a form of **“hidden slavery”** where women's position was shaped and constrained by economic relations; women's emancipation, he argued, would be impossible without transforming class structures.

10.1.1 Hidden Slavery and Marx's Class Analysis

Marx highlighted that the capitalist nuclear family embodies relations of **“hidden slavery.”** Women's labor—both domestic and sexual—is appropriated and normalized as cultural practice. From Marx's perspective, women's social position is structured by class divisions, and gender oppression cannot be separated from economic and class analysis.

10.2 Woman as Commodity in Patriarchal Society

- In matrilineal societies, women and men were equals. But with the rise of private property over the last six thousand years, women gradually became “slaves of men.”
- Moral codes in traditional societies were often rules of **economic and sexual exchange**, disguised as morality, to regulate women as objects of transaction.

- When a man spends money on a woman—whether through gifts or financial support—he affirms his role as buyer, while the woman is positioned as a **commodity or seller of sex**.
- Female “chastity” serves not merely as obedience to men but as a guarantee of men’s property rights over women, a symbolic marker of “slave loyalty to the master.”

10.3 Gendered Division of Space and Domestic Confinement

- In many traditions, households are split: **inner space** for women, **outer space** for men. Men only enter the women’s sphere at night for sexual access.
- Women are symbolically imprisoned within the home, reduced to reproductive and sexual roles, denied independent social presence.

10.4 Legal and Economic Deceptions of Exploitation

- In many legal traditions, marriage is defined as an **economic and sexual contract**. For instance, laws may imply that as long as a man has sexual access, a woman cannot demand financial rights, turning marriage into a **slave-like bargain**.
- Women’s role becomes a multi-functional tool for men: sexual use, domestic labor, and reproduction.
- Political activist Siamak Sotoudeh, in *Woman and Sex in History: From the Goddess of Heaven to the Domestic Slave*, traced how with the fall of matrilineal societies and the rise of patriarchy, women shifted from equality to enslavement, becoming commodities for sexual control and reproduction.

10.5 The Gendered Dynamics of Marriage and Sexual Economy

Marriage in patriarchal capitalism often reduces women to sellers of sex in exchange for economic provision. This creates a **gendered transaction system** where men’s financial power dictates ownership and control over women.

Even in Western countries where prostitution is illegal, shadow industries—escort sites, sexual massage parlors—flourish under capitalist protection. The exposure of **Jeffrey Epstein’s “sex farm”**, linked to intelligence networks like Mossad, epitomizes the intertwining of sexual exploitation, profit, and political corruption.

10.6 Patriarchal Culture and the Media's Role

Media, customs, and institutions reproduce patriarchal structures by portraying women primarily as **commodities of beauty and sex appeal**. With the decline of matrilineal freedom and the rise of patriarchy, women lost equality and became defined through male property rights.

10.7 From Matrilineal to Patriarchal Structures: Sexual Slavery

- Marxist and feminist research highlights the systemic shift from matrilineal to patriarchal societies, where inheritance and lineage consolidation prioritized men's property.
- This transformation turned women into instruments of reproduction and legitimacy.
- Patriarchal institutions—from **Taliban-style medievalism** to **modern capitalist states**—use marriage, particularly monogamy, to cement male hegemony, confining women to the household and reproduction.

10.7.1 The Theory of Self-Objectification

Psychologists **Fredrickson and Roberts** describe how women internalize society's gaze, seeing themselves as objects of sexual evaluation rather than as full human beings. This is fueled by pervasive media messages equating female value with beauty and sexual desirability.

10.7.2 Media Pressure and Commodification

Exposure to sexualized media increases tendencies toward self-objectification. Women begin to view themselves through the lens of male judgment, reducing their agency.

10.7.3 Culture of Exhibitionism

As **Ariel Levy** noted in *Female Chauvinist Pigs*, many women internalize patriarchal roles, believing that flaunting their bodies equates to empowerment, while in reality it reflects assimilation into objectifying systems.

10.7.4 Psychological Consequences

Research shows links between self-objectification and **low self-esteem, anxiety, eating disorders, depression, and difficulties with sexual pleasure**.

10.7.5 Exhibition as Social Pressure

What seems like freedom of dress or display is often a manifestation of **cultural coercion and consumerist systems**, shaping women's identities through male gaze rather than genuine autonomy.

10.8 Commodity Feminism

Commodity Feminism describes how feminist ideals are co-opted by consumer capitalism. Freedom and empowerment are reduced to **consumer choices**—buying products or showcasing the body—rather than systemic change.

10.8.1 Co-optation of Slogans

Slogans like “*My Body, My Choice*”, once rooted in reproductive rights struggles, are commodified in media and advertising, losing their emancipatory context.

10.8.2 Lipstick Feminism (Sex-Positive Feminism)

The third wave promoted the idea that women could be sexual, glamorous, and politically active at the same time. Yet critics argue that this often validates the same objectifying systems feminism sought to dismantle.

10.8.3 Commodification of Love and Emotion

Sociologist **Eva Illouz** shows how romantic love itself has become commodified, tied to restaurants, gifts, and consumer rituals. Love, once intimate and affective, is reshaped as a consumable good.

10.8.4 Sexual Objectification

Media and consumer culture routinely portray women as sexual objects, leading to distorted body image and social alienation.

10.8.5 Irigaray’s Marxist Analysis

Philosopher **Luce Irigaray** argued that women under capitalism embody both **use value and exchange value**, defined by roles like “mother,” “virgin,” or “prostitute.” Similarly, **Arlie Hochschild**’s research on the **commercialization of intimacy** shows how love and care are commodified in contemporary service economies.

10.9 Common Patterns in Sexual Enslavement

Concept	Description
Love as Commodity	Emotional bonds lose authenticity, reduced to consumption.
Woman's Body in Market	Beauty and sexual appeal become market values.
Self-Objectification	Women equating identity with sexual display, often under "empowerment" slogans.

10.10 Conclusion of Part Ten

From the evidence above—derived from Marxist, feminist, and sociological analysis—we can conclude:

- **Love and sex** in consumer society are commodified, their value determined by markets rather than human intimacy.
- Women emphasizing sexual display may feel empowered, but are in fact aligned with market logic, not genuine liberation.
- This alignment consolidates patriarchal and capitalist systems rather than challenging them.
- Semi-nudity or sexual display may appear as freedom but are often **reflections of consumerist coercion**.
- Ultimately, women who prioritize bodily display over socio-political struggles risk being co-opted into the very system they seek to resist.

In the **post-capitalist world**, the line between human and commodity has blurred: **nature, body, desire, and emotion all carry price tags**. Even in “legal” forms like marriage or organ donation, exploitation often hides beneath.

The only path forward lies in **global legal frameworks** and the creation of a **radically egalitarian society**, where gender, race, and class no longer dictate commodification, and where capitalist elites—who reduce everything to goods and services—are dismantled.

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